

Natick: Our Community Yesterday and Today

Natick 360

Honoring our past - Planning our future



Prepared by:

**Metropolitan Area
Planning Council**

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Sponsoring Board Statements

This document was approved by the Planning Board on January 11, 2007, by the Conservation Commission on January 18, 2007, and by the Board of Selectmen on January 22, 2007. The Finance Committee requested a change to the Town Government section of the report and voted to accept the report with this change on May 8, 2007. The School Committee accepted the change to the Town Government section and requested additional changes to the Demographics section of the document. Those changes have been made to the demographics section. On June 2, 2007 the School Committee voted to accept this document with the following additional statement:

“The School Committee is pleased to accept this report with the exception of the demographic projections and related conclusions, suggestions, graphics, and overview items about a possible decline in school-age residents, and on the understanding that this statement will be included in the document. We strongly caution against these projections being used for budgeting policy decisions and especially school-planning purposes.

No projections or forecasts can include every potential variable. These projections and forecasts, however, fail to account for potentially significant factors contained in the report itself. These excluded factors could change, or even reverse, the direction of Natick’s demographic trends and call into question the projections’ results.

For example, the report says that “Considering only the demographic trends in school age population, demand for family housing in the coming decades may decline. Other factors, including the limited amount of new construction, relative housing prices, and the attractiveness of Natick to young families may mitigate this trend [p. 12].” Later, it says, “Changing housing stock (in 40B, 40R and HOOP developments discussed below) may lead to changes to future demographics (i.e., the developments may attract younger families to town) [p. 13].” And finally, it says, “[I]f Natick remains a desirable community in which to live, one would expect that when seniors move from their single family homes to other housing designed to meet the needs of the senior population, other families are likely to move into these homes [p. 15].”

That is, the projections do not reflect the impact of changing housing stock, limited new construction, relative housing prices, the attractiveness of Natick to young families, or the likelihood that families may move into homes vacated by empty-nesters – all indisputable or likely realities, all important drivers of school-age population.

The projections, therefore, are not suited for use in guiding policy regarding schools. Relying on these projections could lead to underestimating future school needs, an error that would benefit no one.

We are most grateful to everyone who has participated in the Natick 360 process. We are especially appreciative of the efforts of the Strategic Planning Oversight Committee (SPOC), which has worked diligently and fairly to make this a document of which we can all be proud.”

Introduction

Strategic Planning Overview

Natick, along with many other communities in the region, faces serious challenges regarding growth, development and finance. The future will bring new proposals for growth and development, and the community will face difficult decisions about the types and level of services offered under increasing financial constraints.

A long-range strategic plan developed through broad participation of community members, under the authority of elected and appointed boards will help Natick prioritize investment of limited resources in the context of a long-range vision for the town. It will also help identify outside funding sources to leverage tax dollars and increase civic participation in Natick's local government.

Natick 360 is the Town of Natick's long-range strategic planning process. It is sponsored by, and run under the authority of, the Town's Board of Selectmen, Planning Board, Finance Committee, Conservation Commission and School Committee. In April 2006, Town Meeting appropriated funds to implement the *Natick 360* process. These funds have been supplemented by private donations from generous corporate sponsors.¹

Five major benefits accrue to the Town of Natick through this planning process. The *Natick 360* planning process will:

- Assemble a rich source of information about the Town's history and current condition;
- Identify what residents value in the community and their hopes for the future;
- Provide information to help boards set priorities and advance collaboration, identifying areas for shared resources and complementary efforts;
- Promote Natick as a desirable community for investment and identify areas of leverage to attract additional resources (businesses, investors, outside funding); and,
- Increase public participation and develop a pool of future civic leaders.

The *Natick 360* planning process will be developed over 16 months. The final plan document, including specific actions and estimated costs, will be submitted for approval at Fall Town Meeting in October 2007. The sponsoring boards may call for a committee to be formed to review progress against the Strategic Plan halfway through the projected five-year implementation period.

The *Natick 360* planning process is managed by the Strategic Planning Oversight Committee (SPOC). The nine members of the oversight committee, made up of one designee from each of the sponsoring boards and 4 members of the community-at-large, are:

- Rosemary Driscoll, designee of the Natick School Committee
- Terri Evans, community-at-large
- Matthew Gardner, designee of the Conservation Commission
- John Heerwagen, community-at-large
- David Parish, Co-Chair, designee of the Board of Selectmen
- George Richards, designee of the Planning Board
- Craig Ross, Co-Chair, designee of the Finance Committee
- Harlee Strauss, community-at-large
- Fred Witte, community-at-large

The SPOC is charged with managing the planning process, recommending professional consultants and overseeing their work on the project, engaging the public to participate in the process, and coordinating involvement by the sponsoring boards. The SPOC is only a facilitation committee. Final authority for all outcomes of the process rests with the sponsoring boards and with Town Meeting.

¹ As of publication of this document, corporate sponsors for *Natick 360* are Middlesex Savings Bank, Natick Federal Savings Bank, Eastern Bank, Belkin Lookout Farm, Metrowest Subaru, Boston Scientific, and WebReply, Inc.

There are four phases in the *Natick 360* planning process:

- Phase I – Our Community Yesterday and Today
- Phase II – Our Shared Vision for the Future
- Phase III – Our Strategic Options
- Phase IV – Our Strategic Choices

Phase I (June through September 2006) produced a report that describes Natick's history and the current conditions in the community. This report describes the baseline conditions in Natick that should be recognized in planning for the future. The report includes some projections that take the baseline conditions and project them into the future. In these cases, the assumptions underlying the projections are explained.

Phase II (October through December of 2006) focuses on current attitudes and future hopes: developing a set of shared visions and values for the Natick community. The cornerstone of the visioning process was the "Vision for the Future Weekend" on October 27-29, 2006. During the weekend, members of the public met with skilled facilitators to discuss current community values and hopes for the future. This information, and information drawn from focus groups, on-going surveys, community meetings and meeting with the sponsoring board and committees, has been consolidated in this Values and Vision report.

During Phase III, the elected and appointed Boards in Natick will work with experts to develop a number of strategic options – different scenarios for establishing policies or programs that could be implemented in each strategic focus area. The various strategic options will be presented in a report "Natick: Our Strategic Options" in April 2007.

Finally, in Phase IV, the public will be invited to prioritize the various strategic options that will shape Natick's future. The results of these community meetings will be tested by a scientific-sample survey of the community at large.

The final Strategic Plan will be created by the sponsoring boards, after consideration of the results of the Phase IV priorities and the scientific-sample survey. The final strategic plan report will be submitted for approval by Town Meeting in the fall of 2007.

Intent of this document

Natick: Our Community Yesterday and Today is a foundation reference document that briefly describes Natick's history, and then provides extensive data about conditions that exist in Natick today. The intent is to provide a baseline context for discussion of the community as it exists today, in preparation for a dialogue about its future.

The report is organized into sections that cover Natick's geo-physical setting, demographics, economics and commerce, traffic and transportation, and an overview of town government and municipal finances.

The analyses in this document make some projections about the future, based largely on standard demographic analysis. These projections are estimated from historical trends. The actual future results will be determined by a combination of historical trends and policy decisions made today.

Town History and Context

John Eliot, a Puritan minister from Cambridge, established Natick as the first Indian settlement to be recognized by the General Court of Massachusetts in 1651. Eliot directed the construction of a meeting house on the site of the current Eliot Church in South Natick and an Indian agricultural community was settled around this central village. The Indians built a wooden bridge across the Charles River enabling cultivation on both sides of the river.

Today, more than 350 years later, we can still feel the influence of this early agricultural settlement on the South Natick community. Eliot Street, Union Street, and Pleasant Street still radiate out from the central village that was founded in 1651. Residents can cross the bridge at Pleasant Street and visit Belkin Lookout Farm with fields that have been under continuous cultivation for more than 300 years.

As the town grew, new homes were established to the north in villages in Natick Center and further north in Felchville (near today's intersection of Route 9 and Route 27). Each of these villages was connected by horse paths which are now Route 27, Route 16, and Route 135. This was the configuration of Natick through the Revolutionary War and much of the 18th century.

As more people settled in the community, not all could support themselves by working the land. People began to work in cottage industries, picking up raw materials from wholesalers, making products in their homes, and selling them back for distribution. The most successful of these industries in Natick was the shoe industry. Leather was purchased by cobblers and brought back to their homes where they would craft shoes in small workshops behind their properties.

Natick's most famous cobbler was Henry Wilson, Vice President of the United States under Ulysses S. Grant, in whose memory a cobbler shop is located at the corner of Mill Street and West Central Street.

When the Boston-Albany railroad was constructed and routed through Natick Center in 1836, the shoe industry in Natick expanded and wooden commercial blocks were built in Natick Center to support this industry. These commercial blocks expanded into factories and through the early years of the 20th century, workers from around the world immigrated to Natick to work in one of 23 different shoe factories operating in the community.

Natick was also home of the Harwood Baseball Company – inventor of the figure-8 hand-stitched baseball and the first baseball factory in the country. The Harwood Baseball Factory is now 12 Walnut Street, abutting North Avenue next to the Natick Center train station. The Harwood Baseball building is the only wood-structure building remaining from the 19th century industrial past in Natick Center.

In 1874 a fire burned Natick Center to the ground. Fortunately, the industries were well-insured and Natick Center was reborn in the years immediately following the fire with large brick commercial blocks that still line Main Street today. The buildings in Natick Center reconstructed in this time period were all designed with an interesting “neo-gothic” architectural style that provides a striking façade lining Main Street. A person standing on Main Street in Natick Center today can see 150 years of history in the streets, rail lines, and architecture of the downtown.

Natick is also a community rich in natural resources – more than 600 acres of land in the town is water, dominated by Lake Cochituate. This lake, once a major reservoir for Boston, was also a recreational destination for Boston families. Many small cottage homes were built on the shores of Lake Cochituate and the other ponds in Natick. To this day, entire neighborhoods in Natick are defined by these former camps and cottage homes.

After World War II, Natick's population soared as large developments such as Wethersfield were built. The post-war suburban boom was accompanied by a boom in car sales. Route 9 was expanded to accommodate more cars and the trolley line which once ran along the road was removed. The Massachusetts Turnpike was built and an exit located at Natick's northwest corner. The turnpike enabled

development of office parks, the “Golden Triangle” retail district, and the further expansion of Natick as a suburban community. Today the Golden Triangle is one of the highest density retail districts in the state of Massachusetts and it will soon be home to the largest mall in New England.

Residents can travel through the community and see the impact of historical development going back as far as 350 years: from South Natick’s village layout, to Natick Center’s industrial roots, to waterfront cottage homes, to the burgeoning expansion of Natick’s retail Golden Triangle.

These historical imprints are the result of major social, economic, and lifestyle trends. Today, Natick is faced with a rapidly changing economic, social, and financial landscape. Decisions made now will have long-lasting impacts on the future of the community.

Natick 360 is the community’s initiative to define a desirable future for the community – a future that preserves those aspects of the community which are cherished, while addressing agreed upon areas for improvement. We hope that residents in the near and distant future will benefit from the informed decisions made as part of this process.

Geo-physical and Regional Setting

"Nestled between the upper basin of the Charles and Concord Rivers in Middlesex County, Natick provides a mixture of suburban residential and industrial land use. Local and regional commercial districts are situated along its major highways, reflective of its location within an easy commute to Boston, Worcester and Providence. Its three main transportation arteries are the Massachusetts Turnpike, Route 9 and the Boston and Albany Railroad, all of which connect Boston with western Massachusetts. Natick owes much of its growth to its location on these major east-west corridors. Routes 27 and 135, major collector roads, cross in the center of town and provide connections to Framingham to the west, Wellesley to the east, Wayland to the north and Sherborn to the south. Route 16 goes through South Natick, connecting to Wellesley and Sherborn."²

The Town of Natick consists of 16 square miles of land located approximately 18 miles to the west of Boston and 25 miles to the east of Worcester along the Massachusetts Turnpike. The location of the community, its proximity and relation to other expanding municipalities, its physical features such as the ponds and the Charles River, and the transportation routes serving the town at various stages of its history, have all played a role in the development of the community that exists today.

The most prominent natural resources within the Town of Natick consist of the chain of lakes comprising the Lake Cochituate Reservoir system. Additional water resources include large ponds such as Nonesuch, Dug, Pickerel, and Mud, smaller ponds throughout the town, and the Charles River in the southeastern portion of Natick. These water resources provide water supply, wildlife habitat, and recreational uses for the residents of the town and the region. In 2004, the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) undertook an in depth analysis of the Cochituate system, including recommendations for improving water quality by addressing non-point pollution. (Copies of this report are available through MAPC.)

The physical character of the Town of Natick is a result of the sands, silts, gravel and rocks deposited in the area as the glaciers melted at the end of the last ice age. These glacial deposits comprise the majority of the surface of the ground in town, although there are locations where the bedrock outcrops are present. The composition (i.e., the size of the soil particles) and the depth of the glacial deposits (over the bedrock) are the features which enable Natick to obtain sufficient potable water to meet the needs of its residents.³

The Town of Natick is served by its own municipal-level water supply. Wells are located on municipal lands north of Pickerel Pond, near Lake Cochituate, and on the western shore of Morses Pond (see Map 2, Natural Resources⁴). These well fields have a maximum state-permitted pumping level of 5.63 million gallons per day. The Town of Natick municipal water demand in year 2000 was approximately 3.62 million gallons per day. Based upon projections completed by MAPC as part of the MetroFuture project, Natick's water demand due to increased residential and commercial growth is expected to increase to approximately 4.03 million gallons per day by 2030. It therefore appears that for the foreseeable future, the town will not exceed its state-issued Water Management Act permit. The Town of Natick is connected to the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority sewer system. The capacity of the nearby MWRA trunk sewer lines is sufficient to allow for continuing growth in the Town.

The Town of Natick is served by state routes 135, 27, 16 and 9. The major highway route to the east and west is the Massachusetts Turnpike (I-90) which provides access to Boston and connections to I-95 (Route 128) and I-495. Natick is also served by commuter rail, which provides access to Boston and

² Regional setting description from Town of Natick Open Space and Recreation Plan, December 2002

³ For a more in-depth review of geology, refer to the 2002 Open Space and Recreation Plan

⁴ Maps 1 through 7 referred to in this report are found in the Appendix

Worcester. Stations are located in Natick Center and in West Natick. From Natick Center to the northwest portion of the town is a rail spur which historically ran to the Saxonville area of Framingham. This rail line is proposed to be converted to a rail trail which will connect several portions of Natick to the downtown, and which will also provide access to the Cochituate State Park. See also the Transportation section of this report for further information on this proposed trail

Significant areas of natural resources, including ponds, agricultural lands, wildlife habitats and municipal well protection areas, have been preserved by the Town, the state, and private organizations such as Massachusetts Audubon Society. These areas appear on Map 6, Recreational, Cultural and Municipal Amenities, and are discussed further in the Recreation and Cultural Amenities section of this report. The Natick Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP) notes that Natick's two largest open space resources, Lake Cochituate State Park and the Broadmoor Audubon Wildlife Sanctuary, cross town boundaries into abutting towns and are shared with residents of the region. In a similar fashion, additional regional open space resources, including facilities such as Callahan State Park in Framingham and Walden Woods Reservation in Concord, are within a reasonable drive and available for use by Natick residents.

Population and Housing

Overview:

- **Natick's population has increased over the past two decades and is projected to continue to rise through 2030⁵. The town's population growth rate has exceeded that of the MAPC region. Between 2010 and 2030 the rate of population growth will probably slow overall in Natick, as well as relative to the MAPC region as a whole.**
- **While Natick's population under age 55 may decline, the empty nester population, age 55 and over, may rise substantially. Between 2000 and 2030 the population aged 55 and over is projected to increase by 73% in Natick. In the MAPC region the rate of growth is projected to be 71%, while among Natick peer⁶ communities growth is expected to be a more modest 65%.**
- **Household size in Natick has declined in recent years, and is projected to continue falling as the population ages. This may drive up demand for smaller housing units.**
- **Over 60% of Natick's housing stock is single family detached units, and more than half of the town's housing stock was built before 1960. These units may be too large and require too much maintenance for empty nesters.**
- **One third of Natick's households have incomes below 80% of the regional median income, the level at which households are generally eligible for subsidized housing.**
- **Housing prices in Natick have increased substantially in recent decades. However, the Town's homes remain relatively affordable in comparison to the region. This is especially true, on average, for condominiums.**

Demographics and Housing Demand

Natick's population increased by 9.2% between 1980 and 2000. Although population growth also occurred in the MAPC region, the rate of growth was slower (6.3%). Among Natick's peer communities population growth measured 1.9%. This small increase in the peer group was caused by a fall in total population in the 1980's and a lower rate of growth during the 1990's. Also, increases in population in some communities were offset by declining population in others.

During the 1990's Natick's population increased by 5.4%. Population growth occurred at a slower rate in both the MAPC region (4.9%) and Natick's peer communities (3.3%). The low rate of population growth among the peer communities was due largely to shrinking population in both Arlington and Burlington. Overall, Natick's population grew faster than most of its peers. Only Canton (12.1%), Walpole (12.9%) and Franklin (33.8%) exhibited higher rates of population growth than Natick. (See Appendix for peer group detail.)

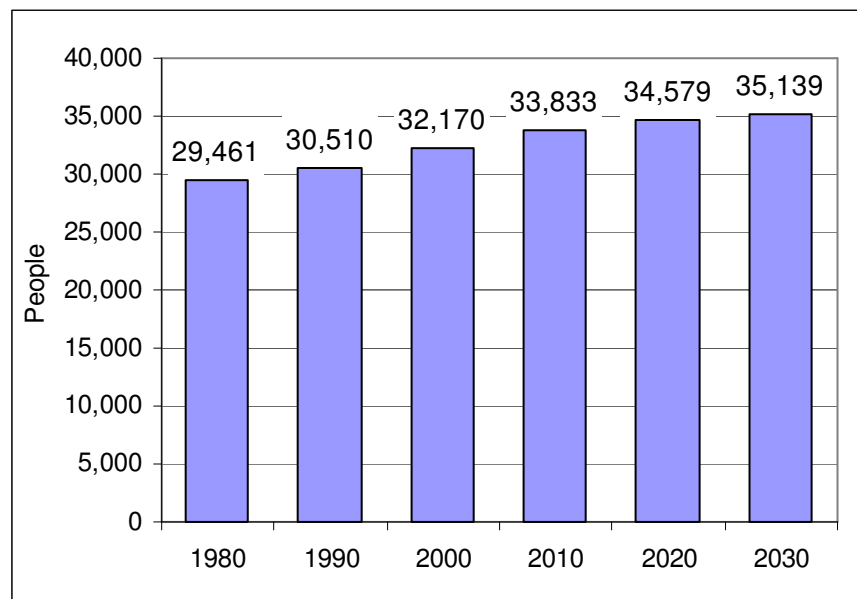
⁵ Demographic projections are made by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council and are used by federal, state, and local governments for land use, water, and transportation planning. A complete description of the demographic projection methodology is provided in the appendix. Demographic projections are subject to change and need to be adjusted regularly to reflect new information that impacts the underlying assumptions. MAPC regularly updates their projections every three years.

⁶ Peer group communities, as determined by Municipal Benchmarks and Natick town manager are within the MAPC region and include Arlington, Burlington, Canton, Chelmsford, Dedham, Franklin, Westborough, Walpole, North Andover, Milton, Needham, Westborough, Reading, Shrewsbury, Northborough, Norwood, Wakefield, Wellesley, Lexington, and Newton.

During the 2000-2010 period, population is forecast to increase 5.2% in Natick, approximately the same rate as during the 1990's. Among the peer communities, population growth may vary less dramatically than during the previous decades. All communities are forecast to have growth in population.

Population growth in Natick is projected to slow dramatically in the decades ahead, increasing by only 2.2% during the 2010's and 1.6% during the 2020's. Slowing population growth with the exception of population growth through immigration will become a national trend as the majority of the "baby boomers" age and there are a smaller number of people in the family formation years. Many couples are waiting longer to have children and are generally having smaller families. This trend is especially pronounced in New England.

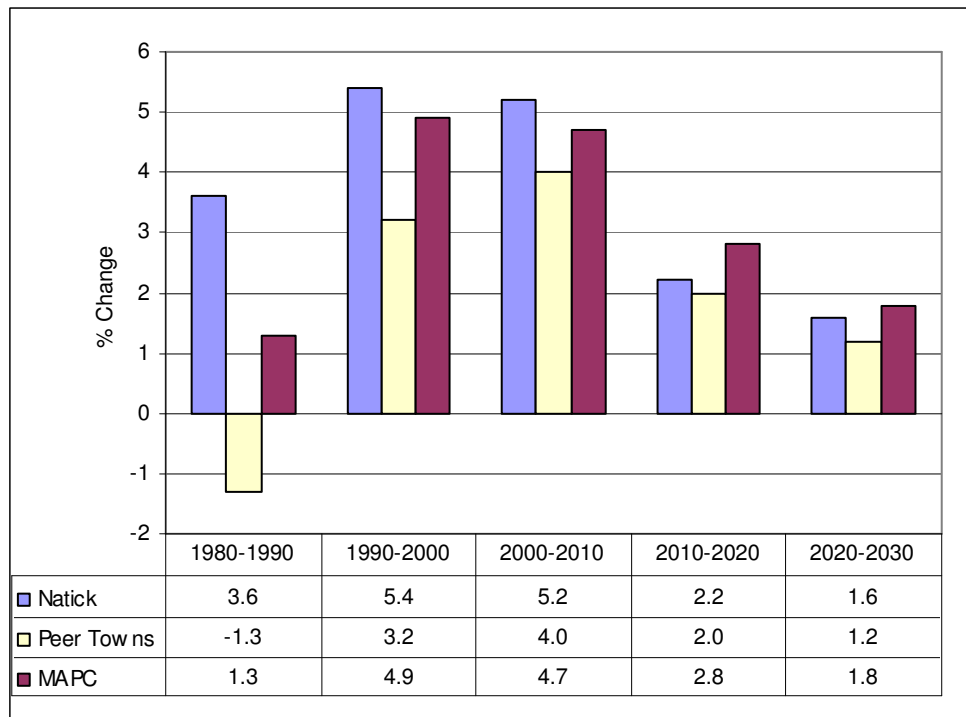
Figure 1. Natick Population Past and Future⁷



Data Source: US Census and MAPC Projections, 2005

⁷ Please refer to the Appendix for an explanation of assumptions underlying demographic projections.

Figure 2. Natick, Peer Community & MAPC Region Population Growth⁸



Data Source: US Census and MAPC Projections, 2005

Population growth has varied widely among different age groups in Natick. This has resulted in a changing age composition over the past two decades, which is projected to continue during the coming decades. Children of the baby boomers, or “echo boomers” born during the 1990’s, caused the population of those aged 0-19 to rise by 16.4%. In the MAPC region, the echo boomer population rose by only 9.4%. Growth in this age cohort among Natick’s peer communities was also lower, at 11.9%.

The school age population in Natick increased at a rate of 16.0% during the 1990’s. Both the peer communities (13.3%) and the region (13.6%) experienced slightly lower growth among this age cohort. Growth may continue during the 2000s at a rate of 3.7%, followed by a possible decline in the school age population of -7.7% during the 2010s and 1.6% during the 2020s. Considering only the demographic trends in school age population, demand for family housing in the coming decades may decline. Other factors, including the limited amount of new construction, relative housing prices, and the attractiveness of Natick to young families may mitigate this trend. Given the variability in factors that will influence changes in the school age population, special demographic projections focusing on this area should be conducted to estimate school enrollments in the future.

Due to the aging of the “baby bust” generation, population in Natick among those in the household formation years (ages 20-34), fell steeply (-27.6%) during the 1990’s. In this regard, Natick was similar to its peer communities (-27.7%), while the fall in population in the MAPC region was a slower -15.7%. Family formation population may decline by over 8.5% during the current decade, while an increase of 4.7% in this age group may occur during the 2010s. The decline during the current decade is expected to be smaller than among the peer communities (-12.0%) and the MAPC region (-5.6%). The fall in population among those aged 20-34 may result in a slight decline in demand for rental and smaller first-time homebuyer dwellings, which may in turn be offset somewhat by growth among those aged 55 and over. Note that demographic projections are based on past trends, which are in part impacted by housing

⁸ Please refer to the Appendix for an explanation of assumptions underlying demographic projections.

stock that existed at the time. Changing housing stock (in 40B, 40R and HOOP developments discussed below) may lead to changes to future demographics (i.e., the developments may attract younger families to town).

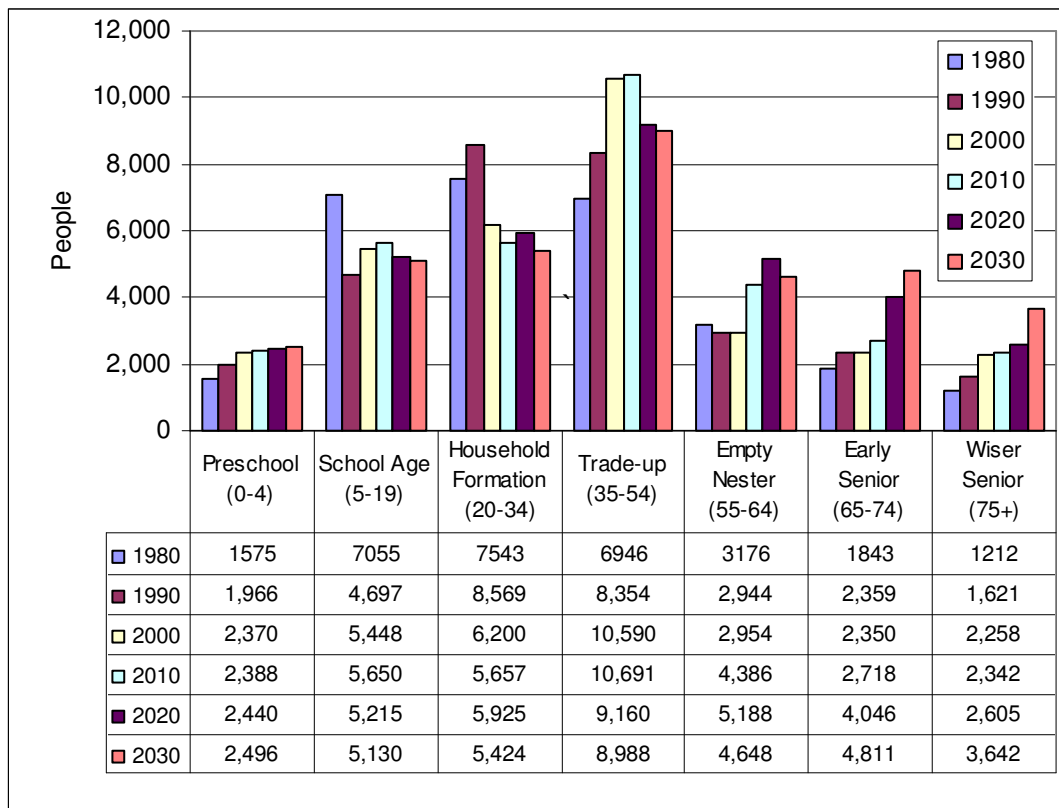
The “trade-up” population (ages 35-54) rose by 26.8% in Natick during the 1990’s – similar to that of both the peer communities and the MAPC region. During the current decade the population is projected to remain flat among those aged 35-54, followed by a potential decline of more than 14% between 2010 and 2020. The age 35-54 portion of the total population may fall from 32.9% in 2000 to 25.6% in 2030. This population decline may reduce the demand for typical single family homes.

The “empty nester” population (ages 55-64) grew slowly in Natick (1.7%) and within the MAPC region (2.2%) during the 1990’s. The peer communities, however, experienced a decline in population in this age group (-4.1%). Between 2000 and 2010 the Town’s population aged 55-64 is projected to increase by nearly 50%, resulting in a rise of its share of total population from 9% to 13%. Similar growth might occur in the MAPC region (45%), while much slower growth might occur among the peer communities (34.6%). The rate of growth in Natick among the population in this age cohort is projected to slow to a smaller, but significant rate of 18% during the 2010s. This is projected to be followed by a decline in this population of 10.4% in the 2020s.

The population aged 65 and over rose by nearly 26% in Natick during the 1980’s and 16% during the 1990’s. The MetroWest⁹ population growth during the 1990’s was nearly identical to the Town’s, while the MAPC region grew only 5%. Over the coming decades the senior population is projected to rise sharply. The rate of increase in Natick may be 10% during the current decade, increasing to 31% and 27% during the 2010s and 2020s, respectively. The rise in population among those over age 65 might result in its share of total population increasing from 14% in 2000 to 24% in 2030. As the population ages, demand for smaller housing units requiring less maintenance, and housing accompanied by services, may rise. Thus, the town should consider focusing some of its future housing development on the needs of an aging population.

⁹ The MetroWest subregion of the Metropolitan Area Planning Council consist of the communities of Ashland, Framingham, Marlborough, Natick, Southborough, Sudbury, Wayland, Wellesley and Weston.

Figure 3. Natick Age Trends 1980-2030¹⁰

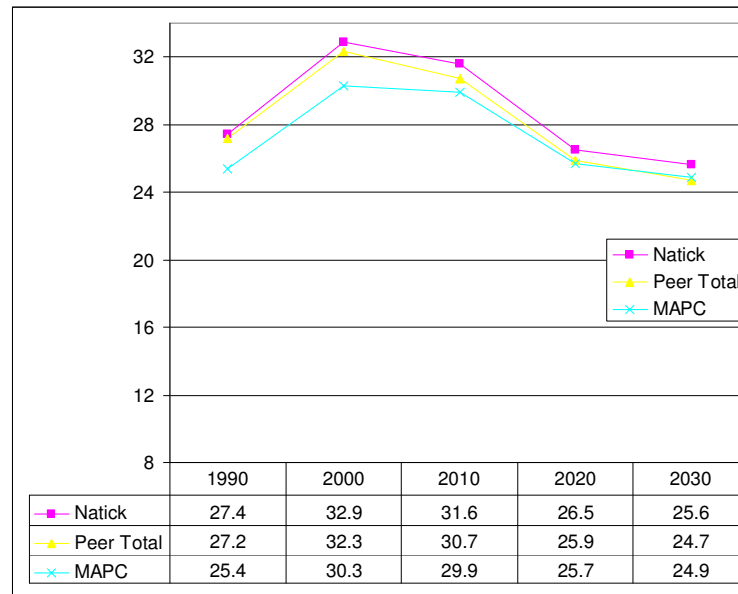


Data Source: US Census and MAPC Projections, 2005

Figures 4 and 5 show the projected change in age composition of Natick based on these demographic projections. The share of population among those in the prime working years, or the trade-up cohort, is projected to fall over the coming decades from 32.9% of the total population in Natick in 2000, to 25.6% of the total in 2030. Similar drops are likely to occur in both the MAPC region, and among the peer communities.

¹⁰ Please refer to the Appendix for an explanation of assumptions underlying demographic projections.

Figure 4. Population Aged 35-54 as a Percentage of Total Population in Natick, the Peer Communities and the MAPC Region¹¹



Data Source: US Census and MAPC Projections, 2005

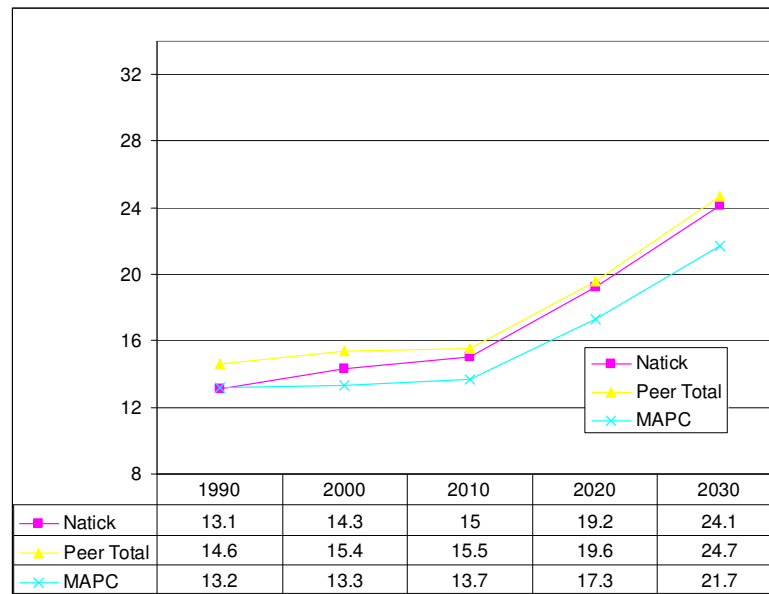
The picture among those age 65 and over is quite different. Seniors are projected to grow from 14.3% of the total population in Natick in 2000, to 24.1% in 2030. Similar growth is projected to occur in the peer communities and the MAPC region.

Unlike previous generations, the aging baby boomers are expected to be healthier, more active, better educated, more likely to remain in the workforce, and more likely to participate in community life. The changing demographics will nonetheless have many implications for how a community plans for the future. The challenges will include adjusting the social infrastructure, health care, and other services to support healthy and productive aging and adjusting the physical infrastructure to provide a greater variety of housing and transportation options.

As mentioned above, this aging of the population may lead to a decline in the demand for single family homes, and a rise in demand for housing which accommodates those 65 and over. However, if Natick remains a desirable community in which to live, one would expect that when seniors move from their single family homes to other housing designed to meet the needs of the senior population, other families are likely to move into these homes.

¹¹ Please refer to the Appendix for an explanation of assumptions underlying demographic projections.

Figure 5. Population Aged 65 and Over as a Percentage of Total Population in Natick, the Peer Communities and the MAPC Region¹²



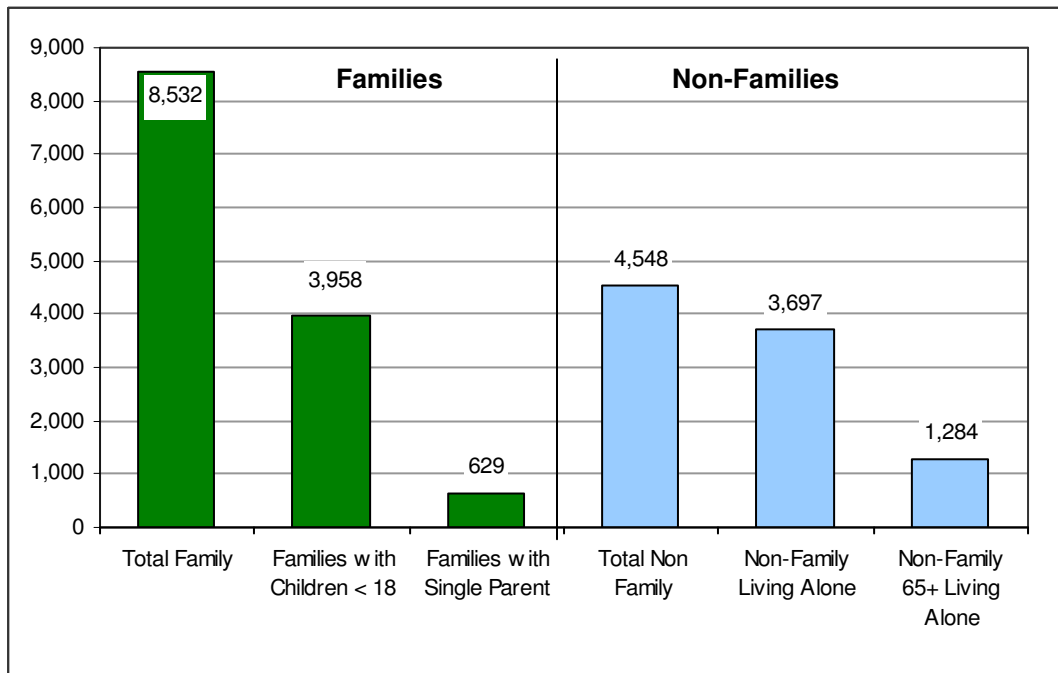
Data Source: US Census and MAPC Projections, 2005

In 2000 there were 13,080 households in the Town of Natick - 65.2% were family households and 34.8% non-family households¹³. The share of family households in the MAPC region was 61%, slightly lower than within the town. The proportion of family households in Natick has been relatively stable over the past decade, declining 2% from 68% in 1990. Similar trends occurred in the region. Of households in Natick, 30.3% were two-parent families with children, 4.8% were single parent families, and 9.8% were elders living alone. Compared to the MAPC region, Natick had more two-parent families with children but fewer single parent families, non-family, single heads of household and elders living alone. In 2000, 24% of Natick's households (including both family and non-family households) had an individual 65 years or older. A decline in average household size has accompanied this change in household composition may increase demand for smaller housing units. The figure below shows the makeup of family and non-family households.

¹² Please refer to the Appendix for an explanation of assumptions underlying demographic projections.

¹³ According to the US Census, a household includes all of the people who occupy a housing unit as their usual place of residence; a family is a group of two or more people who reside together and who are related by birth, marriage or adoption.

Figure 6. Number of Households by Type in Natick, 2000



Data Source: US Census 2000

The number of households in Natick grew at a rate of 8.9% during the 1990's while the average household size fell. Although the number of households with children did increase in 2000, the number of non-family households and householders living alone increased more, leading to a decline in household size. By contrast, in the MetroWest subregion average household size grew. With 2.4 persons per household, Natick's households are smaller than both the MetroWest subregion and the MAPC region overall.

The population of Natick is primarily white (90.6%). The peer communities also have a large proportion of white residents (89.8%). Within the MAPC region, the white population makes up 77.2% of the total. Among the racial subgroups, Natick and its peer communities are very similar.

Figure 7. Racial Composition of Natick, Peer Communities and MAPC Region, 2000

	White	African American	Hispanic	Asian	Other	Two or More Races
Natick	90.6	1.6	2.0	3.9	0.4	1.6
Peer Towns	89.8	2.0	1.7	4.8	0.5	1.1
MAPC	77.2	7.4	3.9	5.3	3.9	2.4

Data Source: US Census

During the 1990's Natick became more diverse not only in terms of its racial composition, but also in terms of where its residents were born. In 2000, 9.8% of Natick residents were foreign born. The largest region of birth represented in Natick's foreign born residents is Europe. The highest growth was for those coming from Latin America. The proportion of Natick's Foreign Born increased from 6.6% in 1990 to 9.8% in 2000. See Appendix for 1970 -2000 Changes in Foreign Born Residents in Natick by Census Tract.

Figure 8. Region of Birth of Foreign Born Natick Residents, 2000

	1990	2000	1990%	2000%
Total Foreign Born	2,010	3,168	6.6%	9.8%
Europe	888	1,204	44.2%	38.0%
Asia	539	1,006	26.8%	31.8%
Africa	41	44	2.0%	1.4%
Latin America	171	533	8.5%	16.8%
Northern America	339	374	16.9%	11.8%
Oceania	32	7	1.6%	0.2%

Data Source: US Census

Housing Supply Inventory

The number of housing units in Natick grew by 5.7% during the 1990's – slightly higher than the MAPC region (5.0%). Low vacancy rates indicate high demand and tight supply, generally leading to cost increases. As the 1990's began, vacancy rates in Natick for rental units were relatively high (8%), while homeowner vacancy rates were already quite low (1.5%). During the 1990's the homeowner vacancy rates declined marginally while rental vacancy rates fell substantially. By 2000 both homeowner and rental vacancy rates were extremely low, even lower than the statewide figures. Overall vacancy rates in Natick were 2.2% in 2000, compared to 9.1% in Massachusetts. (Note that 2000 was the height of housing demand. Out-migration and new construction since 2000 may have resulted in higher vacancy rates.)

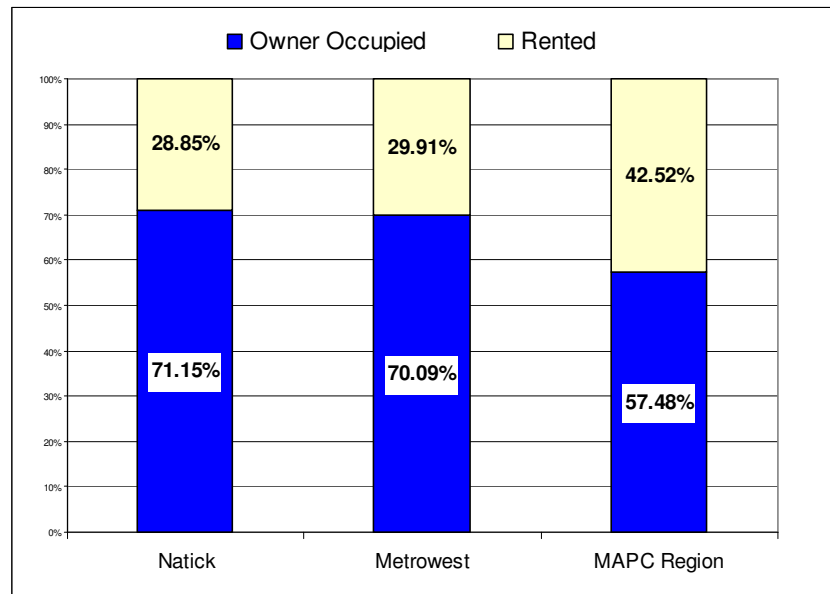
Figure 9. National, State and Natick Vacancy Rates by Tenure, 1990 and 2000

Vacancy Rates	1990	2000	MA 2000	National Standard
Rental Vacancy	8.0%	2.6%	3.5%	5.0%
Homeowner Vacancy	1.5%	0.4%	0.7%	3.0%
Total Vacancy	5.0%	2.2%	9.1%	6.8%

Data Source: US Census

As of 2000, 71% of Natick's housing stock was owner occupied and 29% was renter occupied (see Figure 10). The owner-occupancy rate was comparable to the Metrowest communities. Conversely, in the MAPC region, home-ownership rates were substantially lower, at 58%, and rental rates much higher (43%). In 1990, rental units within Natick were a larger share of total units, representing 33% of the total housing stock.

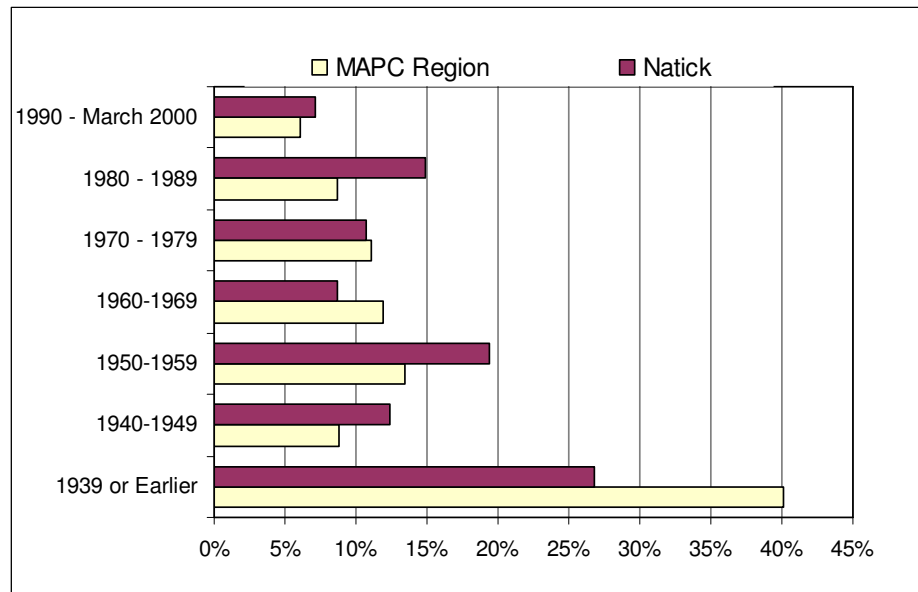
Figure 10. Natick Housing Renter vs. Homeowner, 2000



Data Source: US Census

A substantial share of Natick's housing stock (27%) was built before 1940, much lower than the share of older housing in the MAPC region overall (40%). Significant growth in the town's housing stock occurred during the 1950's and 1980's, while the region's growth was much more equally distributed across the decades between 1940 and 2000. Roughly two-thirds of Natick's housing stock was built before lead paint laws were enacted in the 1970's. This older housing may be in need of repairs, remodeling, or lead paint removal. This potential requirement for comprehensive housing improvements may be a difficult task for an aging population.

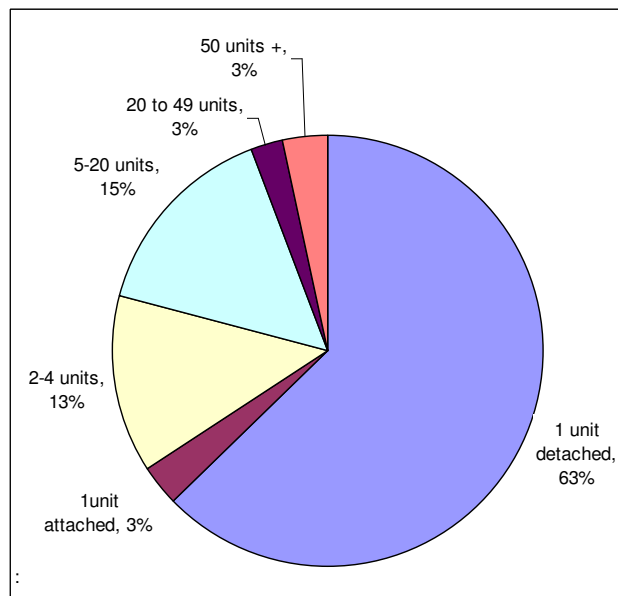
Figure 11. Age of Housing Stock: Natick and MAPC Region



Data Source: US Census 2000

The proportion of single-family detached housing (63%) changed little during the 1990's, remaining much higher than the MAPC region (44%). Single-family attached units represented only 3% of total housing units. The number of units in 2-4 family structures (13%) and those with 5-20 units (15%) were similar. Structures with over 20 units comprised a much smaller share of total units (6%).

Figure 12. Natick Housing Stock by Type of Structure, 2000

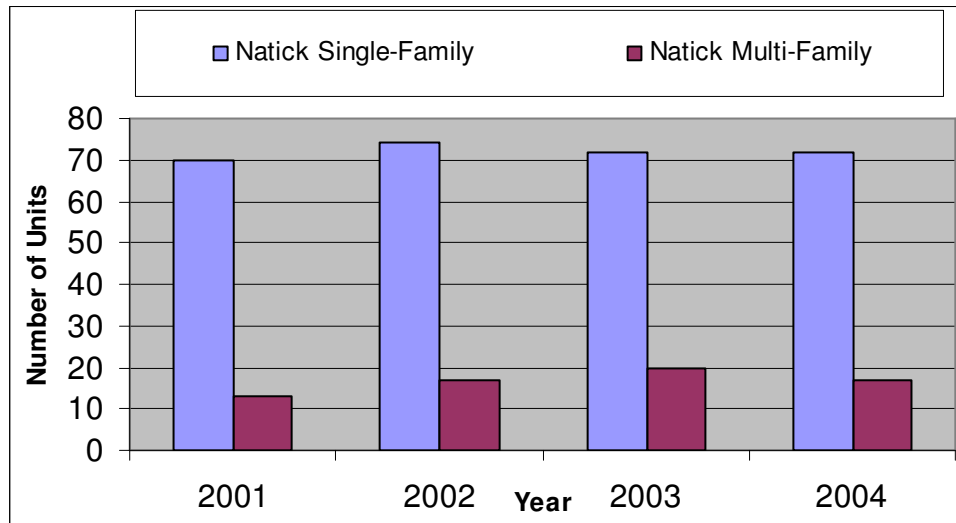


Data Source: US Census

During the past decade a substantial percent of the housing permits issued in Natick have been for single family units, with roughly 50-75 single-family permits issued per year. Data is not available for all years for the multi-family permits. However, the most recent four years of data available (2001 – 2004) do

include both single-family and multi-family permits. For this time period, the multi-family permits ranged from 12 – 20 units per year (or between approximately 15 and 22% of total permits). A substantial number of multi-family developments are now in the planning process (see Figure 17).

Figure 13. Building Permits for Single Family and Multifamily¹⁴



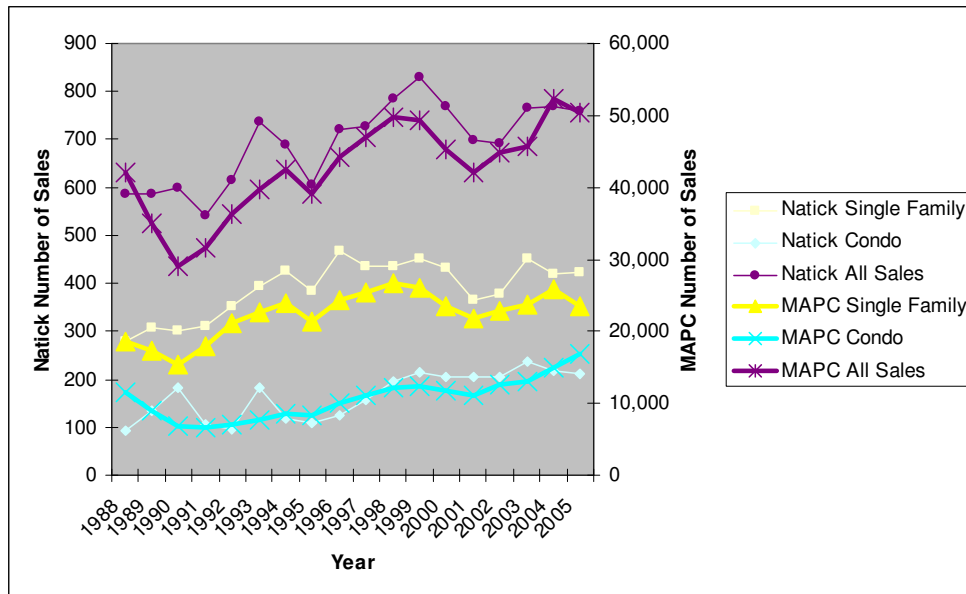
Data Source: US Census Building Permits Survey. 2001-2004 multifamily permit data is provided by Natick Community Development Department.

Housing Affordability

Single Family housing units represent a large majority of the total housing units in Natick, and they also represent over 50% of the housing units sold in each year since 1990. As the number of condominium units has increased, so has its share of sales from 16% of total sales in 1988, to 28% in 2005. During the same time period the total count of units in multi-family buildings sold has fallen from 36% to under 16%. In the MAPC region in 2005, single family sales also comprised around 50% of total units. Condominiums comprised one-third of the total units sold, while the share of units in multi-family buildings sold represented 20% of the total.

¹⁴ Permit data supplied by US Census and Natick Community Development Department.

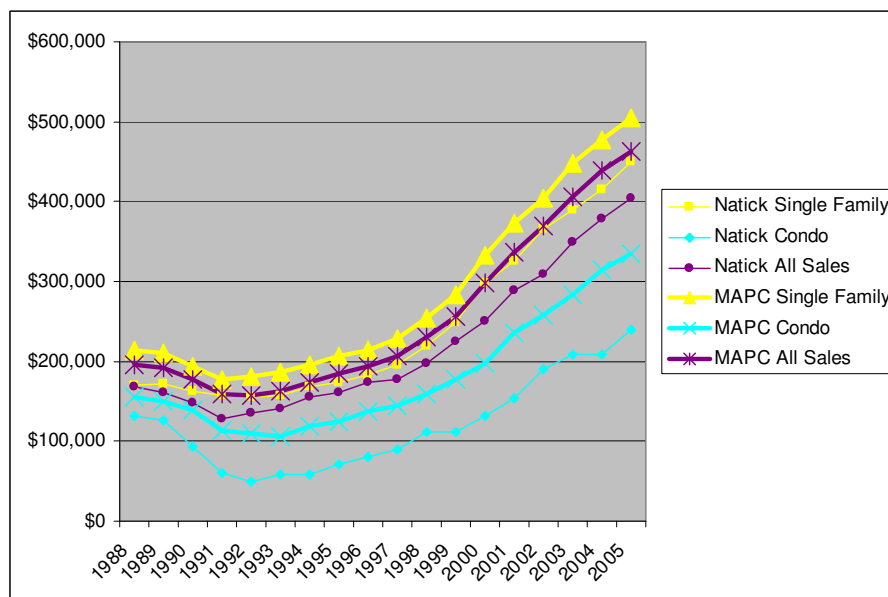
Figure 14. Number of Sales (Housing Units)



Data Source: Banker & Tradesman

Housing costs are an important measure of affordability within a community. As Figure 15 illustrates, per unit housing prices in the town have risen significantly (240%) between 1988 and 2005. This increase was greatest among single family units (264%). Although condominium prices rose dramatically (181%), this increase was not nearly as great as for single family homes. This was partially due to the dramatic dip in condominium prices in the early 1990's. Within the MAPC region, median sales prices remain higher than those in Natick. The rate of price increase in the region was lower than in Natick for single family units (237%). Condominium prices in the region rose at a higher rate (215%) than within the town.

Figure 15. Median Housing Price



Data Source: Bankers & Tradesman

However, from 2000 to 2005, the rate of increase in condo prices in Natick (82%) has exceeded the rate of increase for the region (70%). The 2000 to 2005 rate of increase in sales prices of single family homes in Natick (61%) has similarly exceeded the rate of increase in the region (52%). It appears that in recent years demand for homes in Natick is stronger than in the MAPC region as a whole, and prices are increasing more rapidly as a result.

The state of Massachusetts has enacted two statutes to encourage localities to provide affordable housing opportunities to low and moderate income households. One of these programs, Chapter 40R, seeks to locate these units in accordance with the principals of “smart growth”.¹⁵

Chapter 40B was enacted in 1969 and enables local Zoning Boards of Appeals (ZBAs) to approve affordable housing developments under flexible rules if at least 20-25% of the units have long-term affordability restrictions. The goal of Chapter 40B is to encourage the production of affordable housing in all cities and towns throughout the Commonwealth. The standard is for communities to provide a minimum of 10% of their housing inventory as affordable. If municipalities are below the 10% threshold, the state’s Housing Appeals Committee can overturn any local rejection of a 40B permit. A total of 47 cities and towns have now met the 10% standard. Communities above the 10% threshold can still accept 40B development proposals at their own choice.¹⁶

Many communities have used Chapter 40B to successfully negotiate the approval of quality affordable housing developments. However, the program is controversial, because the developer (non-profit organizations or limited-dividend companies) has a right of appeal if the local zoning board rejects the project or imposes conditions that are uneconomic, and the local decision can be overturned by the state’s Housing Appeals Committee. Also, the 10% affordability goal can be a bit of a moving target. As the number of new housing units increases within a community, the number required to meet the 10% affordability goal also rises. Additional details can be found on the Department of Housing and Community Development web site at: <http://www.mass.gov/dhcd/Toolkit/ch40Bgl.htm>.

Chapter 40R was approved in 2004, with a focus on encouraging the development of housing consistent with “smart growth” principles. Under this legislation municipalities receive financial payments if they adopt “smart growth zoning districts” in eligible locations to allow by-right housing development along with appropriate business, commercial, and other uses. Communities must include 20% affordable housing, and meet other requirements. The affordable units established under Chapter 40R may be counted toward the community’s 10% affordable housing goal under Chapter 40B. In order to encourage communities to establish Chapter 40R zoning overlay districts, the state provides the communities with the following financial incentives:

- Incentive payments of \$10,000 to \$600,000 to the municipalities at the time of zoning approval, with the amount dependent upon the potential number of units to be established in the district,
- Incentive payments of \$3,000 per new residential unit in the 40R district at the time a building permit is issued,
- Priority ranking for the municipality in a series of other state grant programs,
- Under the companion Chapter 40S, a commitment to assist the municipality with the cost of educating children from 40R developments, in the event that the property tax revenues from the developments are not sufficient to cover these municipal costs.

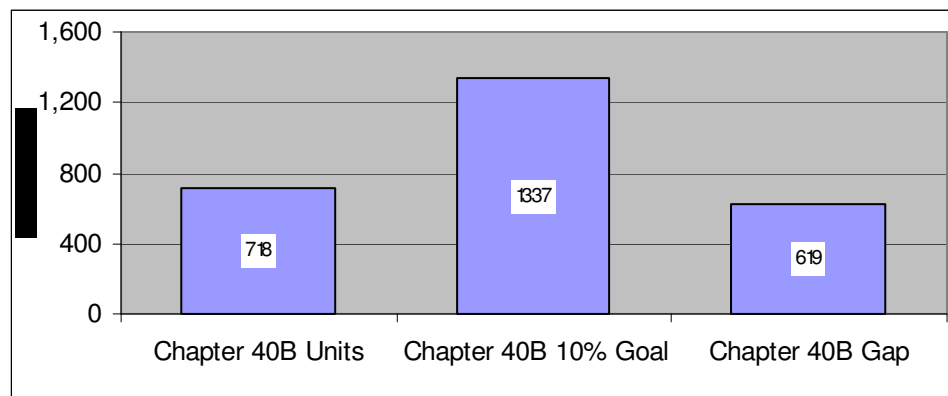
The Town of Natick is in the process of proposing the establishment of a Chapter 40R overlay district to enable the redevelopment of the Natick Paperboard site. Additional discussion related to Chapter 40R is in the Physical Plan and Zoning section of this document. Additional information relating to Chapter 40R can also be found at the DHCD web site at <http://www.mass.gov/dhcd/40R/default.htm>.

¹⁵ “Smart growth” is designed to promote development while protecting the environment, encouraging social and economic equity, and conserving energy and water resources. Smart growth will refocus a larger share of regional growth within central cities, urbanized areas, near transportation nodes and in communities already served by infrastructure. It will reduce the share of regional growth that occurs on newly urbanizing land, farms and environmentally sensitive areas. See the MAPC web site at http://www.mapc.org/regional_planning/MAPC_Smart_Growth.html for more information and the MAPC list of Smart Growth Principles

¹⁶ 40B information from Citizens Housing and Planning Association (CHAPA) web site at http://www.chapa.org/40b_fact.html

According to the state's Subsidized Housing Inventory, which keeps track of all housing units that qualify under Chapter 40B, Natick has 719 subsidized units. These subsidized units constitute 5.4% of its 13,370 year-round housing units, or 619 units short of the 10% goal. Until the town achieves the 10% goal, developers can continue to propose 40B developments anywhere in town, and perhaps achieve state approval even if the municipality rejects the proposal. On the other hand, if the town proactively zones certain areas for smart growth development, it can move closer to the 10% goal, while simultaneously locating these units in areas that the town has deemed appropriate for additional density and where infrastructure and services are available for the residents (see also the HOOP or 40R discussion in Physical Plan and Zoning portion of this report).

Figure 16. Natick Subsidized Housing Units – June 2006



Data Source: MA DHCD

Nearly all of the subsidized housing units in Natick currently are rental units. However, there are a number of proposed affordable housing projects which would create homeownership opportunities as well as rental units for low and moderate-income families. As a result of these proposed developments, Natick hopes to achieve the 10% goal within the next few years.

Figure 17. Natick Proposed Subsidized Housing

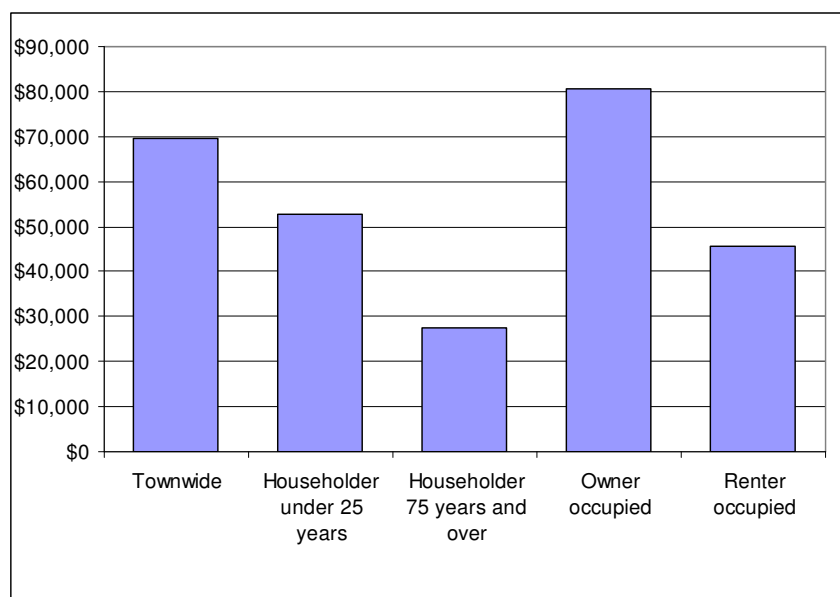
Proposed	Type	Total 40B Units
HOOP(20 South Ave)	Ownership	5
HOOP(42 South Ave)	Ownership	2
Hunter's Hill	Ownership	25
Natick Mall Expansion	Ownership	47
South Natick Hills	Ownership	75
Cloverleaf 40B	Rental	183
DMR/DMH Group Home	Rental	61
Grant Street	Rental	24
Deway Street	Ownership	2
Natick Paperboard	Ownership	28
Natick Armory	Ownership	4

Data Source: Town of Natick, Housing Plan, updated by Community Development Department September 2006

Naturally, income affects affordability. Natick's median household income of \$69,755 was 26% greater than the Primary Metropolitan Statistical Area (PMSA) in 1999 and fell midway within its peer communities. The median income of Natick's home owners was \$35,000 higher than that of renters.

Median income of renters relative to homeowners ranged from 38% in Reading to 68% in Burlington. In Natick this ratio was 57%. The youngest householders had median income levels 76% of the town-wide median. This is much higher than most peer communities, indicating that Natick has a growing affluent young population. By contrast, households headed by seniors over age 75 had income levels under 40% of the town-wide median.

Figure 18. Natick's Median Income by Type of Household, 1999

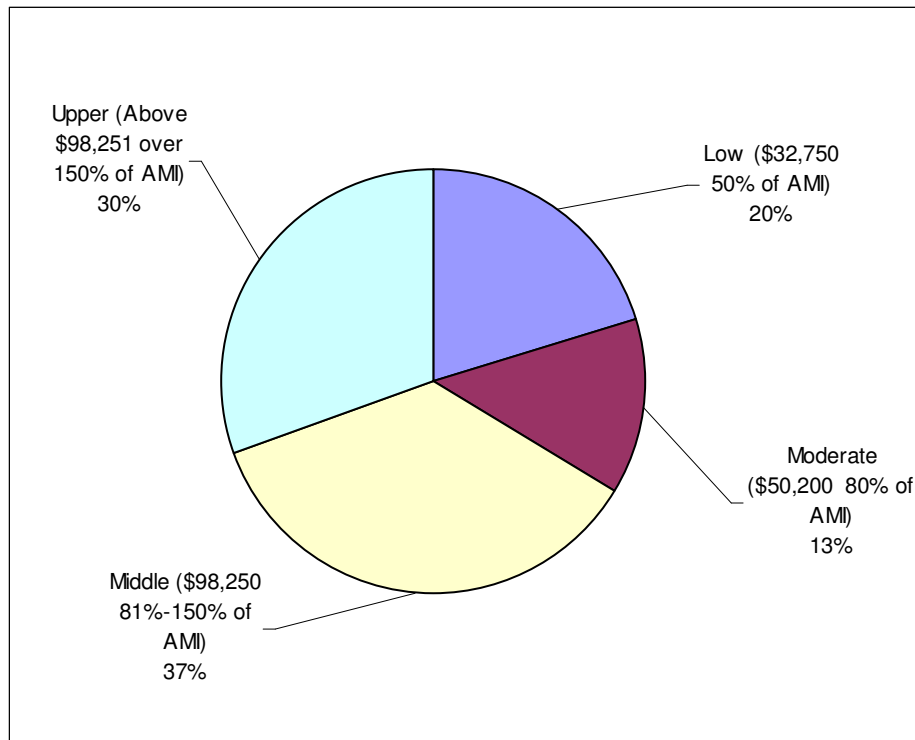


Data Source: Census SF3

An estimated 33% of Natick's households, or about 4,388, have incomes below 80% of the regional median family income (see Figure below)¹⁷. This is considered "moderate income" and is the level that qualifies for many affordable housing programs. Of these households, almost 2,650 have incomes below 50% of median, considered "low income." Middle income households – those with incomes between 80% and 150% of median – make up 37% of the town's households, while upper-income households constitute about 30%.

¹⁷ This estimated breakdown does not adjust for family size. Cut-offs used in chart are based on the U.S. HUD regional median income for a family of four for the year 2000 applied to the Census income distribution for Natick. Low income (50% of median) = \$32,750; moderate income (80% of median) = \$50,200; middle (81%-150%) = \$98,250; upper income (over 150%) = over \$98,251.

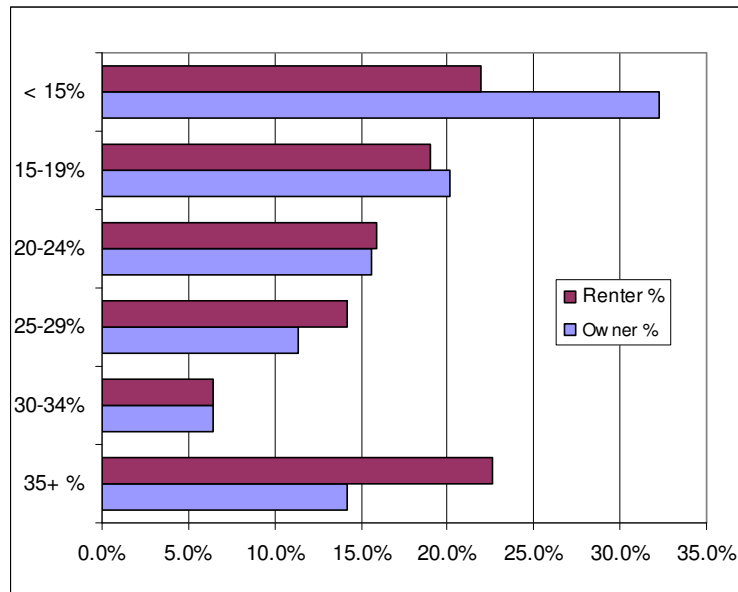
Figure 19. Natick Household Income, 2000



Data Source: US Census and DHCD

High housing costs have the most severe impact on those with the lowest income levels. Of the renter households where data are available, 23% (817 households) pay more than 35% of their income for rent. By contrast, 32% of homeowners pay less than 15% of income on housing.

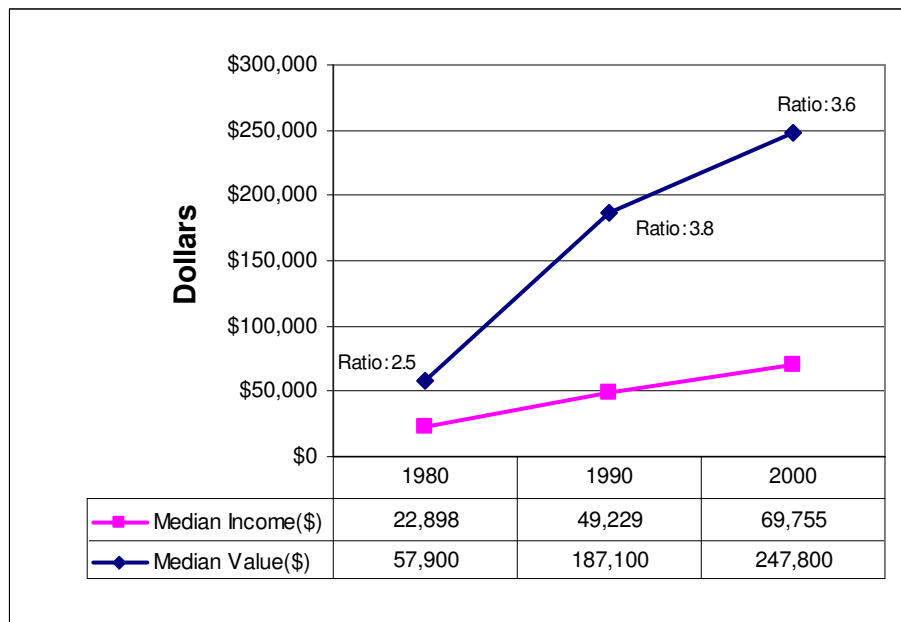
Figure 20. Natick Housing Costs as a % of Household Income, 2000



Data Source: US Census

Over the past two decades, growth in housing prices has exceeded income growth in Natick. This has resulted in an increase in the ratio of median home value to median household income. One rough rule of thumb is that housing is considered affordable if it costs no more than 2.5 times the buyer's annual income. Figure 21 indicates that, by coincidence, the median home value in 1980 was 2.5 times the median household income. However, by 1990, home values had risen to 3.8 times income. Although this affordability ratio fell slightly during the 1990's to 3.6, homeownership has remained unaffordable to households with earnings equal to the median income for the town.

Figure 21. Natick Median Income & Median Home Value



Data Source: US Census

In spite of increases in home values, Natick remains a relatively affordable community compared to others in the Boston region. A 2006 study by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology Center for Real Estate indicated that Natick was one of the most affordable and desirable communities in the region, taking into account factors such as job accessibility and public amenities (quality schools and availability of open spaces). According to this study, approximately 27% of residential units in Natick were affordable to households earning 80% of the Boston Metropolitan Area median income¹⁸.

¹⁸ See full report of MIT CRE at www.web.mit.edu/cre/research/hai/aff-index.html

Commerce and the Economy

Overview:

Natick is commonly known as a shopping destination, with the Natick mall and surrounding stores drawing from well beyond the town's borders. Its prime location along Route 9 and the Massachusetts Turnpike, and its office and industrial parks make Natick attractive to other businesses as well.

- Seven out of 10 working residents commute to other communities in the metropolitan area,
- Natick residents fill approximately 22% of the jobs in the town.
- Natick residents are increasingly well educated, and likelier to pursue managerial and professional occupations than those in the metro region. Residents exceed the region in obtaining college degrees, and household income is one third greater than in the metro area.
- Natick has a diverse mix of jobs. The largest industries include professional and technical services, retail trade, wholesale trade and health care.

Residential Workforce

The number of Natick residents active in the work force increased from 1990 to 2005 by 18.2%, but since 2000 the number of workers has fallen by 5%, to 22,851 in 2005.

Figure 22. Number of Natick Residents in the Workforce and Jobs Located in Natick
Figure 23. 1990 – 2005

Year	Natick Residents in Workforce	Jobs Located in Natick	Ratio of Jobs to Workers
1990	19,331	18,502	0.96
1991	16,951	17,921	1.06
1992	17,403	17,862	1.03
1993	17,730	18,087	1.02
1994	18,441	18,159	0.98
1995	20,626	18,272	0.89
1996	20,537	18,460	0.90
1997	21,585	19,039	0.88
1998	23,033	19,144	0.83
1999	23,635	19,181	0.81
2000	24,156	18,985	0.79
2001	23,878	19,859	0.83
2002	23,673	20,193	0.85
2003	23,333	19,038	0.82
2004	23,483	18,994	0.81
2005	22,851	18,420	0.81
Growth 1990-2005			
	3,520	-82	
	18.2%	-0.4%	

Data Source: Department of Workforce Development

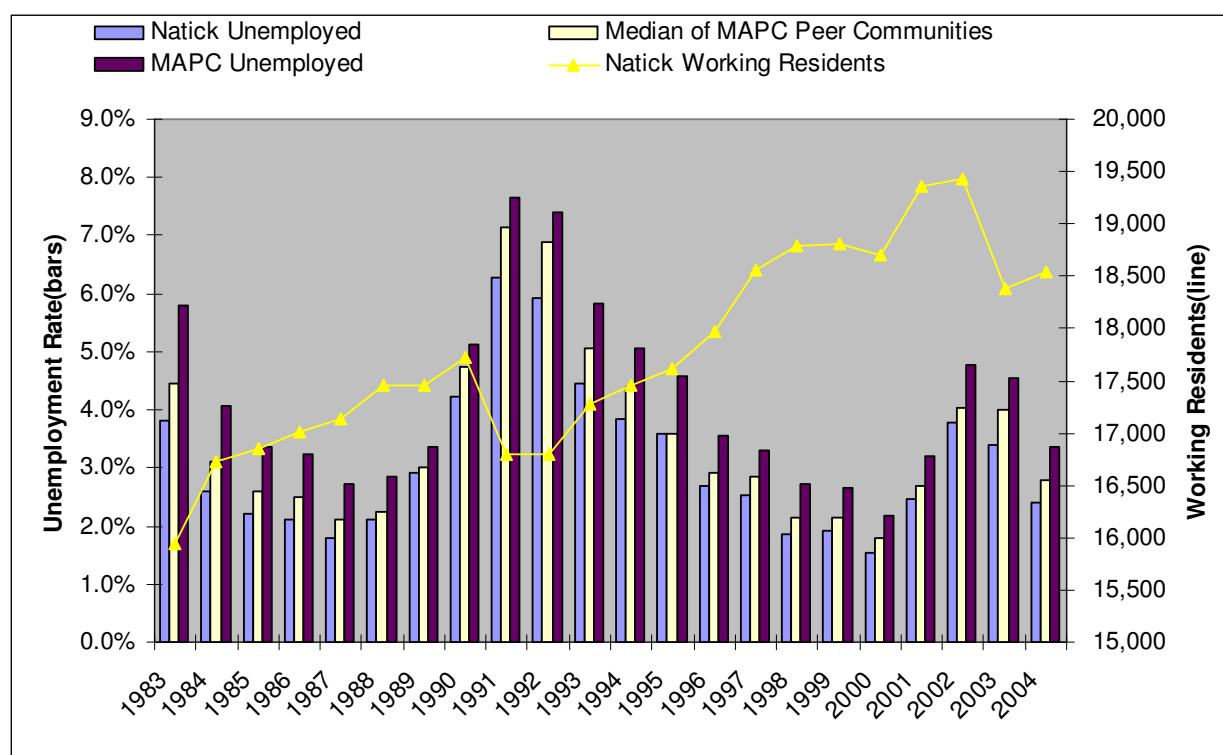
The number of jobs in town also grew steadily during the initial years we studied, rising to 20,193 in 2002 before declining to 18,420 jobs in 2005, after the economic slow down early in the decade. Overall, the number of jobs located in Natick has remained very steady, while the working population has increased.

As a result, the ratio of jobs to working residents has declined steadily from a peak of 1.06 in 1991 to a low of .81 in 2005, a decline of almost 24%.

In 2000, 71% of working residents commuted to other communities within the region, with the largest number (17%) working in Boston. Those residents who worked for Natick employers filled 22% of the jobs in town. (See the Transportation section for further description of commuting patterns.)

Natick residents have been relatively successful in the employment market in the recent decades, with the annual unemployment rate for residents roughly a percentage point below the metropolitan rate since 1983.

Figure 23. Natick, Peer Group and MAPC Unemployment Rate and Number of Working Residents, 1983-2005

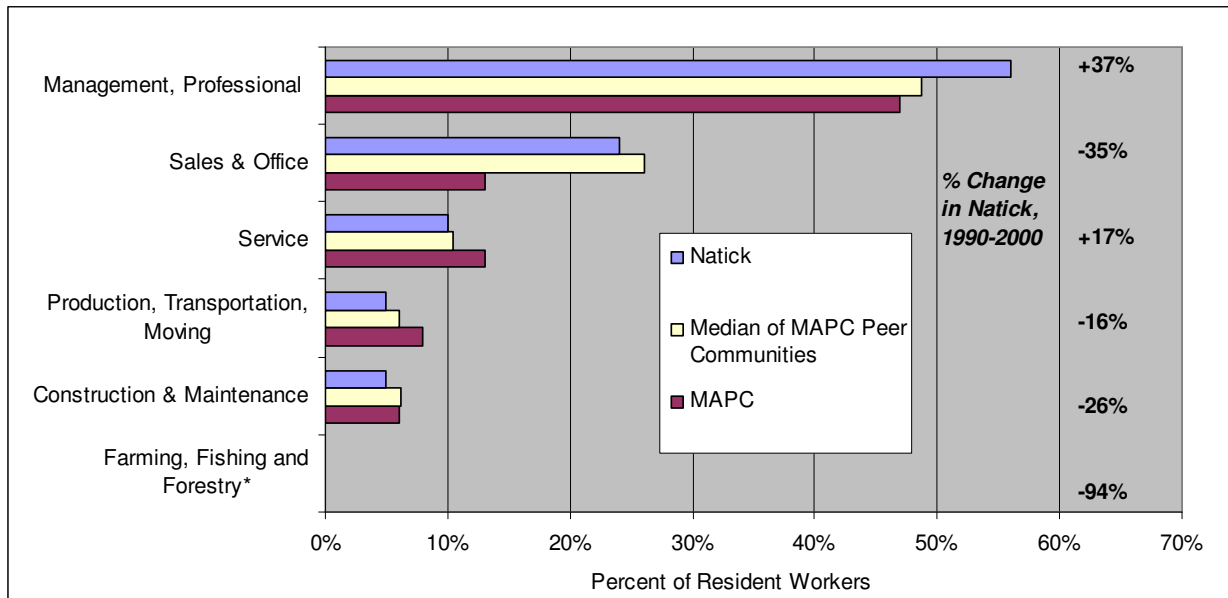


Data Source: Mass. Dept. of Workforce Development

The occupational profile of Natick residents mirrors that of the peer group¹⁹ and the metropolitan region, with the 2000 Census showing the greatest number of residents in the managerial and professional occupations, followed by sales and office work. The proportion of Natick workers in managerial occupations, 56%, is slightly higher than the peer group and the region. In fact, managerial and professional occupations and service occupations were the only two categories to grow in Natick during the 1990's. Natick has a larger proportion of its workforce in sales and office related occupations (24%) versus the region as a whole (13%). Natick's workforce illustrates the national trend away from work involved in producing goods and toward more "knowledge-based" occupations.

¹⁹ Peer group communities as determined by Municipal Benchmarks and Natick town manager that are within the MAPC region includes Arlington, Burlington, Canton, Chelmsford, Dedham, Franklin, Westborough, Walpole, North Andover, Milton, Needham, Westborough, Reading, Shrewsbury, Northborough, Norwood, Wakefield, Wellesley, Lexington, and Newton.

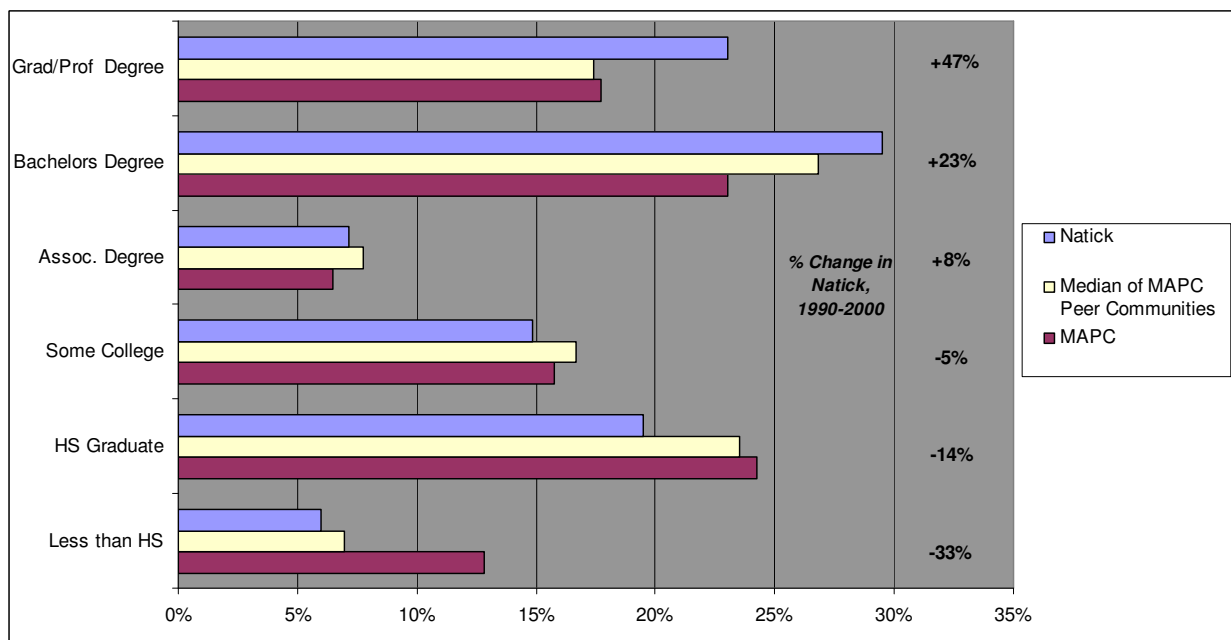
Figure 24. Private Sector Occupations of Natick, Peer Group and MAPC Region Residents, 2000



* Farming, Fishing and Forestry represent less than 1% of employment in Natick, the Peer Group Communities and the MAPC Region. Farming, Fishing and Forestry employed 81 workers in 1990 and 10 in 2000. Data Source: US Census

The growth of managerial and professional occupations has been accompanied by rising educational levels. While Natick's population over age 25 increased by 7% in the 1990's, the number having a college degree or higher jumped by 33% (53% of residents, compared to 41% in the region). A higher proportion of Natick's residents have advanced degrees than residents of the region. (Note that the metropolitan Boston workforce is one of the most highly educated in the U.S.) The number of adults not having completed high school fell sharply in Natick in the last decade.

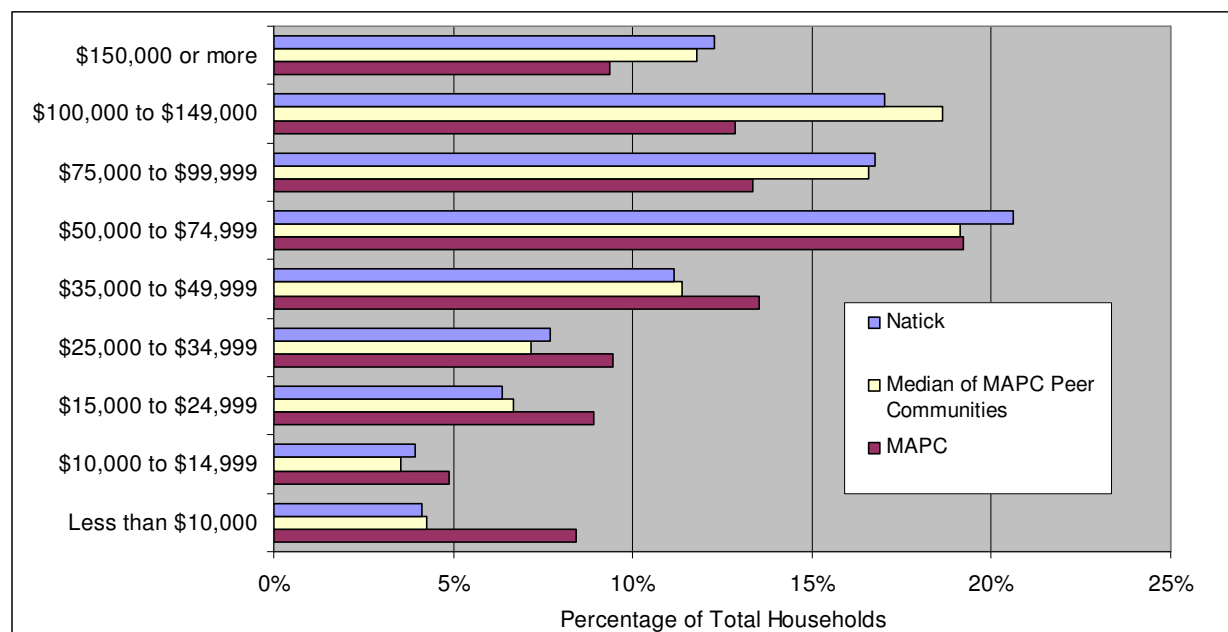
Figure 25. Educational Attainment of Natick, Peer Group, and MAPC Region Adults, 2000



Data Source: US Census

Median household income in Natick rose by 42% in the 1990's to \$69,755, more than 25% above the regional median of \$55,200. When adjusted for inflation, Natick's median income grew over the decade by 7%, outpacing the metropolitan region growth of 2%. Natick's income distribution is clearly skewed more toward upper-middle income brackets relative to the region, having higher proportions of households in all categories over \$50,000. Although the number of Natick residents who lived in poverty fell by 7.3% in the 1990's to 879 individuals or 3% of the town's population, almost one third of Natick households have incomes below the moderate-income threshold and are eligible for subsidized housing. (See the housing affordability section for more detail.)²⁰

Figure 26. Household Income in Natick, Peer Group and MAPC Region



Data Source: US Census SF3

Job Base

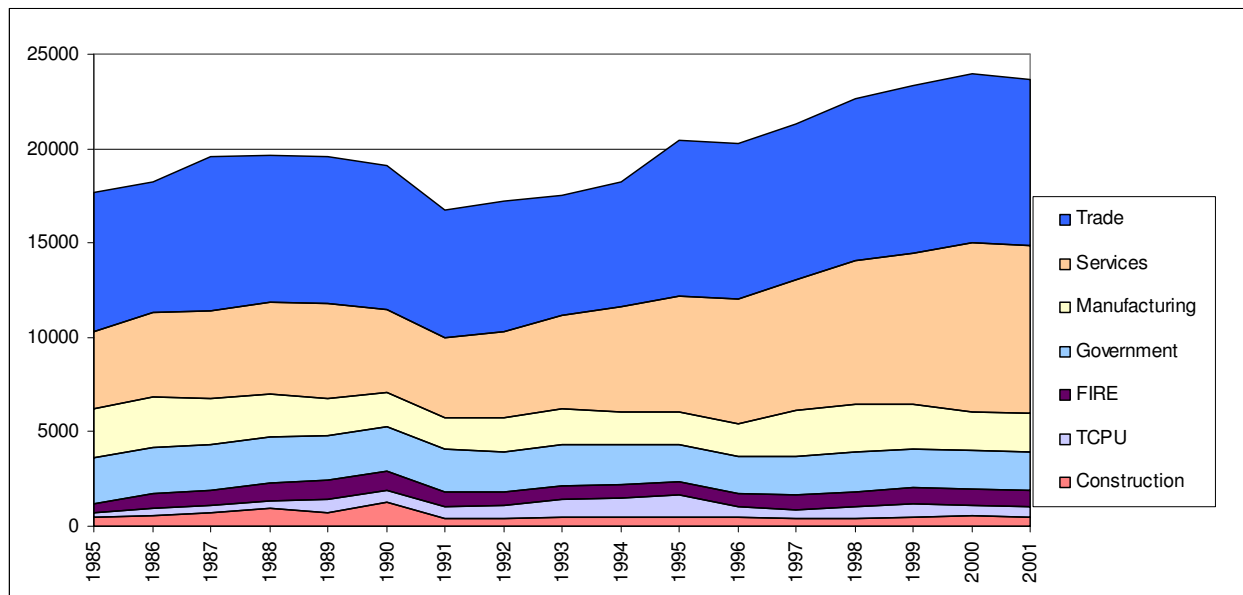
Natick is part of the I-90 and Rte-9 job center in the Boston region, with its prime location at Route 9 and the Massachusetts Turnpike attracting a diverse range of employers including a regional shopping center, major medical center, and a host of information technology companies ranging from industry leaders to startups. The town suffered a significant decline in jobs in the late 1980's, which bottomed out in the recession of the early 1990's. Since then, job growth was fairly steady until the economic contraction of 2000-01 resulted in substantial job losses, many in the types of information technology businesses that have concentrated in Natick.

The number of establishments with employees has grown more steadily than total employment, and the 2005 total of 1,491 establishments is 66% above the 1985 number. The average number of employees working at each establishment has fallen over the last few decades, from 17-19 in the late 1980's to 15-17 in the 2000s, as some large employers were replaced by smaller firms. The list of Natick's largest employers is notable in having two very large enterprises with over 1,000 employees each, as well as a wide range of computing, telecommunications, health care, retailing and hospitality companies. (See Figure 29 for more detail.) It is notable that, contrary to the regional trend of a declining manufacturing

²⁰ The 2000 poverty guideline for a family of four is \$17,050 - a nation wide rate. This guideline is extremely low for communities in Eastern Massachusetts as the cost of living is higher in Massachusetts than in the nation.

sector, the number of manufacturing jobs in Natick appears to have been relatively stable over the past 20 years. (See Appendix for a detailed table on the number of jobs in Natick by sector.)

Figure 27. Jobs in Natick by Sector, 1985-2001*



Data Source: MA DET

* The Bureau of Labor Statistics changed their sector classification system in 2001. As a result, historical comparison to present of jobs by sector is not possible.

The most recent annual jobs data from 2005 shows Natick has a fairly diverse job base with strong representation from high paying, growing industries. (The following information covers jobs located in Natick, as opposed to jobs of Natick residents, which was discussed earlier.) The town's largest employment sector with 5,662 jobs is retail trade, reflecting the presence of the Natick Mall regional shopping center and surrounding shopping plazas. This is particularly concentrated in northwestern part of Natick in the triangle created by Route 9, Route 30, and Speen Street, which is one of the densest areas of retail in the state of Massachusetts. This so-called "Golden Triangle" has been a concentration of retail uses since 1951. Retail stores provide seasonal and part-time work for students and workers who prefer flexible hours or have limited experience. However, the industry's traditionally low hourly wages and significant use of part-time workers result in a relatively low average wage for this retail trade sector.

Natick's second largest employment sector is professional and technical services. These types of companies provide high-paying employment for workers with specialized experience and education. They were very successful in the 1990's, but unfortunately suffered large job losses in the recent economic slow down.

Health care and social assistance is Natick's third-largest sector. MetroWest Medical Center attracts patients from around the region and has more than 70,000 emergency visits annually, making it the second-busiest provider of emergency care in Massachusetts²¹. The health-care industry is the largest in the metro region and traditionally offers a wide range of jobs at various skill and salary levels. Employment in health care tends to be relatively stable through economic cycles and is expected to grow as the area's population ages.

²¹ Natick Massachusetts booklet produced by CGI Communications, for the Town of Natick, 2002, page 36.

Figure 28. Private Sector Employment and Wages for Private Sector Jobs in Natick by Industry, 2005

Industry	Number of Employees	Average Annualized Wage
Retail Trade	5,662	\$27,193
Professional and Technical Services	2,939	\$79,864
Health Care and Social Assistance	2,616	\$40,106
Wholesale Trade	1,849	\$132,807
Accommodation and Food Services	1,570	\$18,931
Information	1,518	\$111,282
Administrative and Waste Services	1,410	\$25,640
Educational Services	1,078	\$41,551
Other Services, Ex. Public Admin	869	\$33,091
Construction	720	\$50,557
Finance and Insurance	601	\$67,357
Manufacturing	791	\$41,581
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	338	\$17,676
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	329	\$50,414
Transportation and Warehousing	151	\$44,764
Natick Average Private Job Wage		\$54,808
MAPC Area Average Private Job Wage		\$57,666

Data Source: MA Department of Workforce Development

Wholesale trade is the fourth largest sector in Natick, with 1,849 employees. This sector includes chemical, electronic goods, hardware and plumbing, machinery, and miscellaneous durable goods merchant wholesalers, as well as electronic markets and agents/brokers. The average annual salary in this sector is the highest in Natick at \$132,807. The sixth-largest sector, information technology, has the second highest average salary at \$111,282. The Mathworks, Inc. is the largest employer in the information technology sector.

Natick's largest employer is the U.S. Government, represented by the U.S. Army Soldier Systems Center. This facility is responsible for researching, developing, fielding, and managing food, clothing, shelters, airdrop systems, and soldier support items. (Natick town government is also a major employer, employing more than 1,500 people, but the town government is not tracked by Dun and Bradstreet and therefore is not listed in the following employment chart.)

Figure 29. Largest Employers in Natick 2006

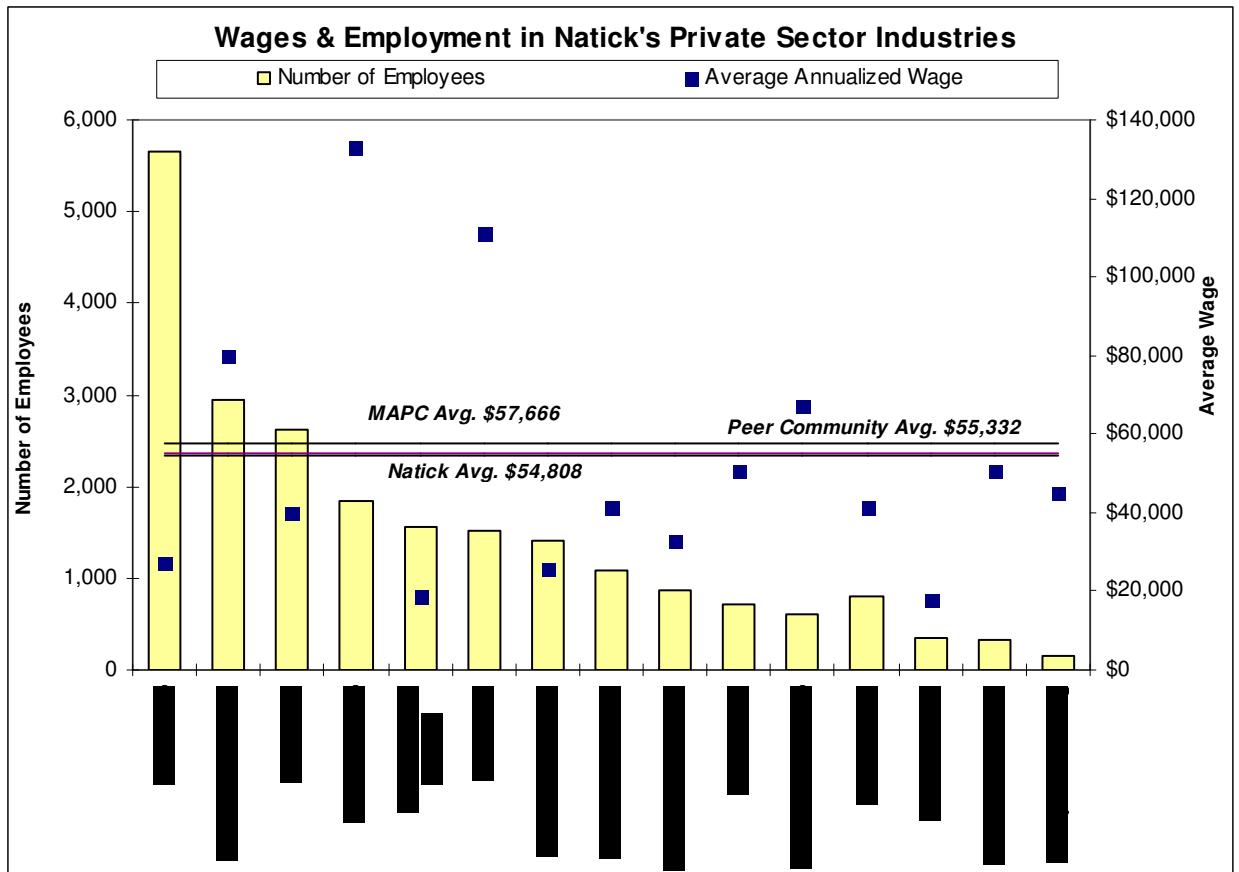
Company	Sector	Employees	Location Type
United States Department of the Army	Military R&D	2,000	Branch
Metrowest Medical Healthcare	Hospitals	1,000	HQ
Mathworks, Inc.	Software	900	HQ
Boston Scientific Inc.	Medical Supplies	750	HQ
BJ's Wholesale Club	Wholesale Clubs	700	HQ
Cognex Corp/Germany Cognex Corp	Measurement Device Manufacturing	535	HQ/Branch
Macy's East LLC	Department Stores	350	Branch
Federated Retail Holdings Inc.	Department Stores	300	Branch
Stop & Shop Inc.	Supermarkets	255	Branch
Kana Software Inc	Software	250	Branch
Michael J Connolly and Sons Inc	School Bus Supply	250	Branch
Oracle Corp	Software	250	Branch

Data Source: Dunn & Bradstreet's Million Dollar Database

As a whole, the mix of industries in Natick is comparable to the region, with the average annual private sector wage of \$54,808 just below the regional average of \$57,606. Natick's excellent highway access and large inventory of modern office buildings should enable the town to continue to attract the types of knowledge-based companies that will drive employment growth in an improving economy.²²

²² Please note that previous income statistics come from the US Census and refer to the resident households of Natick, whereas the figures in this section are from Massachusetts Department of Workforce and Development and refer to the wages paid by employers in Natick. The workers who earn these wages do not necessarily live in Natick.

Figure 30. Wages and Employment in Natick's Largest Private Sector Industries, 2005



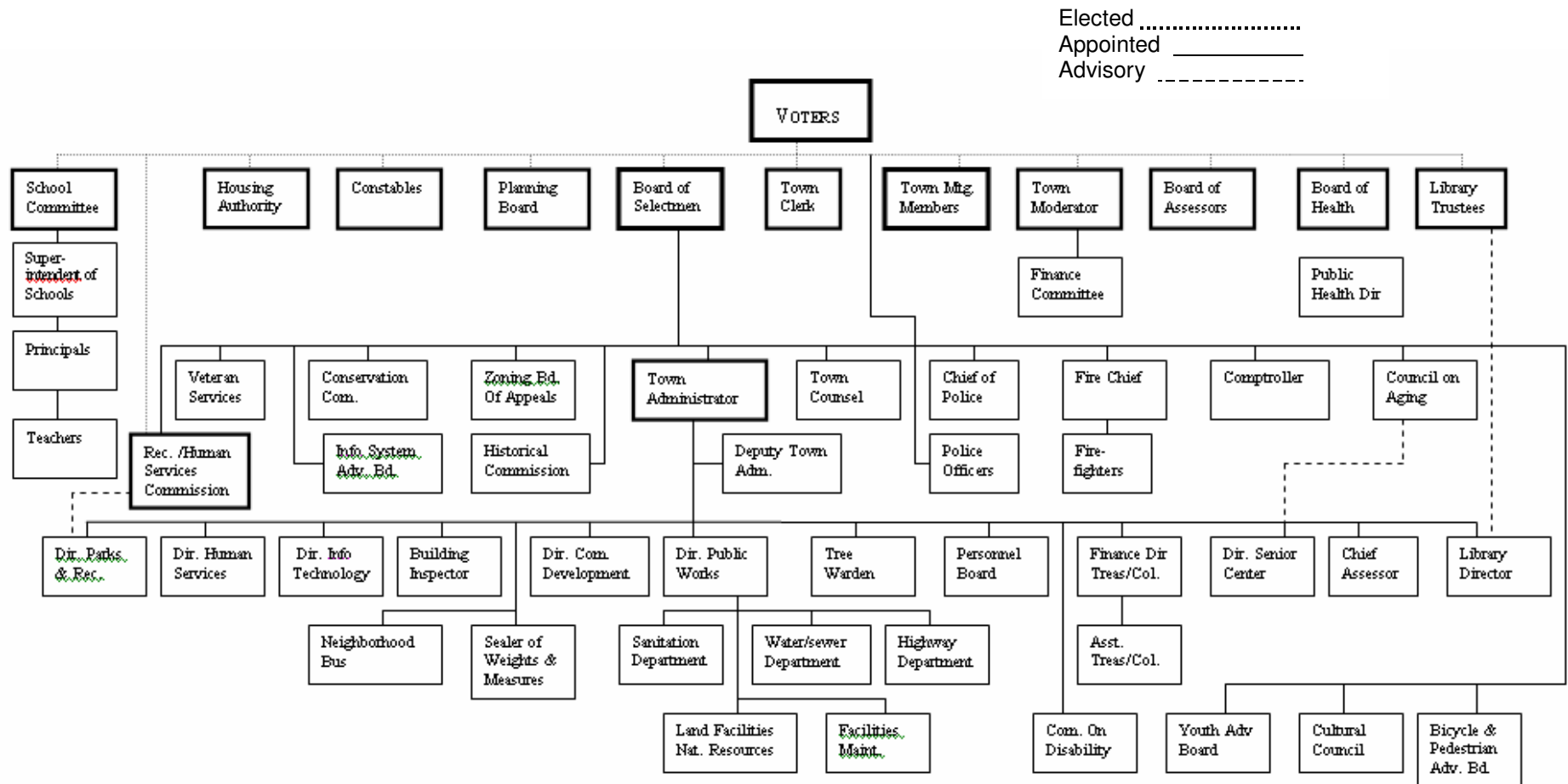
Data Source: MA Department of Workforce Development

Town Government and Finances

Town Government

Natick has an excellent overview of its government structure in a report entitled *Town Meeting Member Handbook*. The Handbook provides an overview of Natick's government structure and describes Natick's budgeting processes and Town Meeting's legislative procedures. A copy of the Handbook is available on the Natick website at www.natickma.gov, as well as in the Morse Institute Library and in the Town Clerk's office at Town Hall.

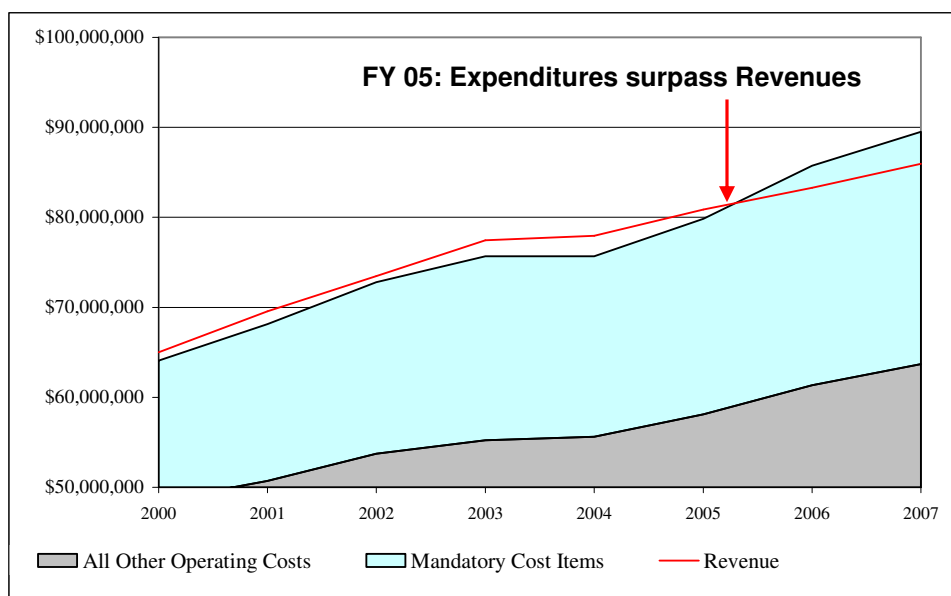
Figure 31. Structure of Natick Town Government



Natick Municipal Finances

The Town of Natick has a \$93 million budget. Natick is similar to most towns in Massachusetts that have struggled with the mismatch between revenues and expenses. Revenues consist largely of the annual property tax levy, which is severely constrained by Proposition 2 ½, and state aid, which fell during the state's recent fiscal hardships. Meanwhile, expenditures have increased, driven primarily by unprecedented increases in the costs of health insurance. During recent history, Natick's finances have been relatively stable. An infusion of resources related to large-scale commercial development has enabled the town to invest in major capital improvement projects while maintaining a high level of municipal services. However, since 2005 Natick's expenditures have increased beyond its revenue.

Figure 32. Operating and Mandatory Costs Relative to Revenue

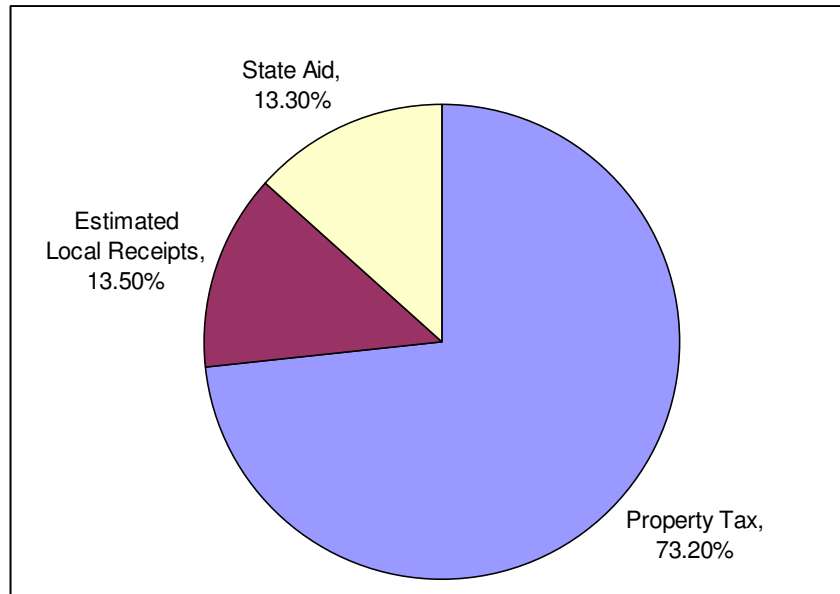


Data Source: "FY07- FY11 Budget Presentation" Natick Town Meeting, April 2006 by Philip Lemnios, Town Administrator

Revenue

Revenue is comprised of three sources: tax levy (property taxes), state aid and local receipts. Additional revenues for Natick schools are provided by federal and state grants. Most recently Natick has experienced a decline in state aid as a proportion of its revenue, and this is consistent with other municipalities in the MetroBoston region.

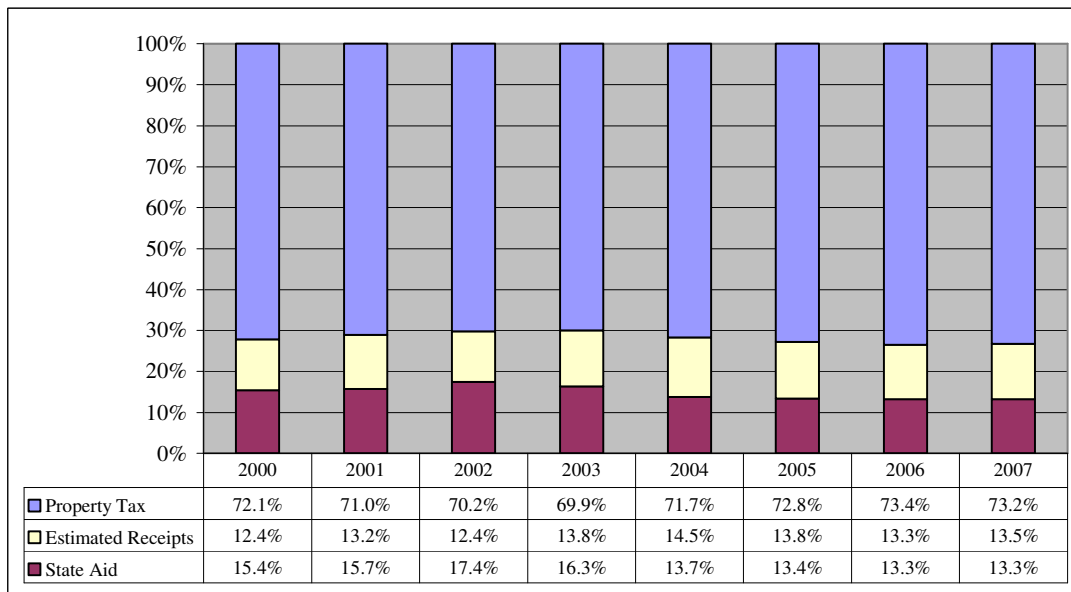
Figure 33. FY 07 Estimated Revenue



Data Source: "FY07- FY11 Budget Presentation" Natick Town Meeting, April 2006 by Philip Lemnios, Town Administrator

State aid as a percentage of Natick's total revenue declined from 15.4% in FY 2000 to 13.3% in FY 2007. This has prompted Natick to diversify its revenue sources, implementing a growing number of fee-based services such as trash disposal and school bus fees. In Massachusetts towns the majority of local services are supported by tax levy. Over 73% of Natick's revenue comes from property tax.

Figure 34. Trend in Generated Revenue for the Town of Natick



Data Source: "FY07- FY11 Budget Presentation" Natick Town Meeting, April 2006 by Philip Lemnios, Town Administrator

Proposition 2 ½²³

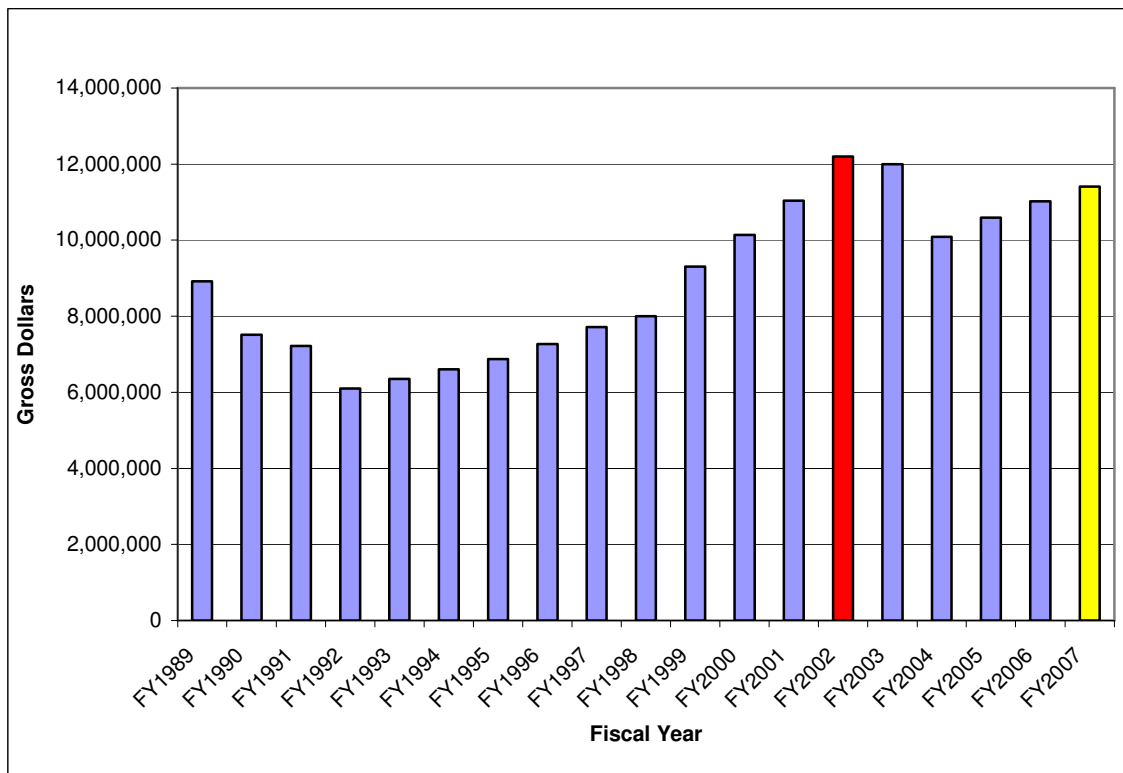
Proposition 2 ½ sets a maximum tax rate of 2.5 percent of assessed value (\$25 per \$1,000), limits the levy to no more than 2.5 percent of a community's assessed value, and limits the growth of the levy to no more than 2.5 percent per year regardless of the growth in assessed value. New growth is not counted in the levy limit in its first year. After that it becomes a permanent part of the levy limit base, leading to a compounding effect as the levy limit is increased annually by 2.5 percent. Hence, new growth becomes one of the few remaining options to increase revenues.

Other options for increasing revenue involve community-wide votes. These are called "overrides," which allow a community to increase its levy by more than 2.5 percent, and referenda which place debt and one-time capital improvements outside the levy. While the override is a permanent increase in the levy, the debt exclusion and capital outlay referenda are time-limited and do not permanently affect the levy limit. In 2000 Natick passed two overrides: an operating override of \$427,000 for ambulance service, that passed by 9,410 votes to 7,436 votes, and a debt-exclusion override that funded \$27,511,381 (net cost to the Town of \$12,150,000 after state reimbursements) in improvements to Kennedy Middle School and Wilson Middle School, that passed by 10,308 votes to 6,499 votes.

Proposition 2 ½ affected the relative balance of the three primary sources of local revenues: the tax levy, state aid and local receipts. Before 2 ½, the tax levy generated about 2/3 of total revenues, with state aid and local receipts roughly splitting the remaining 1/3. State aid increased in the 1980's to offset the decline in local revenues, declined somewhat in the late 80's, and increased again after 1993. After peaking in FY02, state aid declined for several years until an upward trend once again began in FY05 (although totals still have not yet attained the level of the FY02 peak year). Local revenues bottomed out in the recession years and have increased almost steadily since. Local receipts vary, but generally grew in the region from 1983 to 1993.

²³ Portions of the municipal finance section are taken from MAPC's *Toward a Sustainable Tax Policy: Tax Strategies to Promote Sustainable Development in MetroBoston*. (2001) This report also gives a more thorough overview of how Proposition 2 ½ can influence town's land use decisions including a list of development types and their positive or negative fiscal impacts on a municipality.

Figure 35. Trend in State Aid FY1989 to FY2007 for the Town of Natick



Data Source: "FY07- FY11 Budget Presentation" Natick Town Meeting, April 2006 by Philip Lemnios, Town Administrator

An unforeseen result of Proposition 2 ½ is that it often puts pressure on municipalities to attract new growth to support increasing costs of operations without duly considering the impacts of development on the community. Such short-sighted planning based on fiscal needs can lead to tensions among a community's various boards and citizens. Local development decisions, embodied in zoning and other regulations and practices, are often governed more by fiscal concerns than by resource protection or other sound principles. Impacts may include loss of open space and agricultural land, increased traffic and congestion, and greater demands on water and wastewater treatment facilities.²⁴

Property Tax Base

The total valuation of Natick real estate for tax purposes was \$6.1 billion in the Fiscal Year 2006. Of that total, 21% (\$1.2 billion) is attributed to businesses ("CIP" or commercial and industrial buildings and land, plus personal property such as business equipment). Natick's CIP value derives primarily from commercial properties (stores, offices, restaurants), with only 1% from industrial properties.

While the value of the business property in Natick has grown considerably over the last two decades, the CIP share of valuation has been driven down by the much larger increase in residential values. The total value of Natick residences increased by \$3 billion from FY 2000 to 2006, an amount about 6 times the increase in the value of business property. The average value of a single family residential parcel in Natick rose more than 50%, to over \$449,400, from 1990-2005. This increase reflects the soaring values of residences throughout Eastern Massachusetts over the last two decades, resulting in dramatic increases in the residential portion of the tax base in most metro Boston communities. As is seen on Map 5, Changing Land Use, and also Map 1, Historic Land Uses, a significant amount of new development

²⁴ MAPC's *Toward a Sustainable Tax Policy: Tax Strategies to Promote Sustainable Development in MetroBoston* gives a more thorough overview of how Proposition 2 ½ can influence town's land use decisions including a list of development types and their positive or negative fiscal impacts on a municipality.

between 1971 and 1999 was residential, which also served to increase the residential portion of the tax base.

The continued slide of the CIP tax share is not inevitable. Although the Town has relatively little remaining undeveloped land zoned for business, there is substantial opportunity for redevelopment. Based on available land and current regulations, the year 2000 Buildout Analysis conducted by MAPC for the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs indicated that 455,000 square feet of commercial space could be constructed under current zoning. As is noted elsewhere in this report, this figure does not take into account the redevelopment of currently underutilized properties.

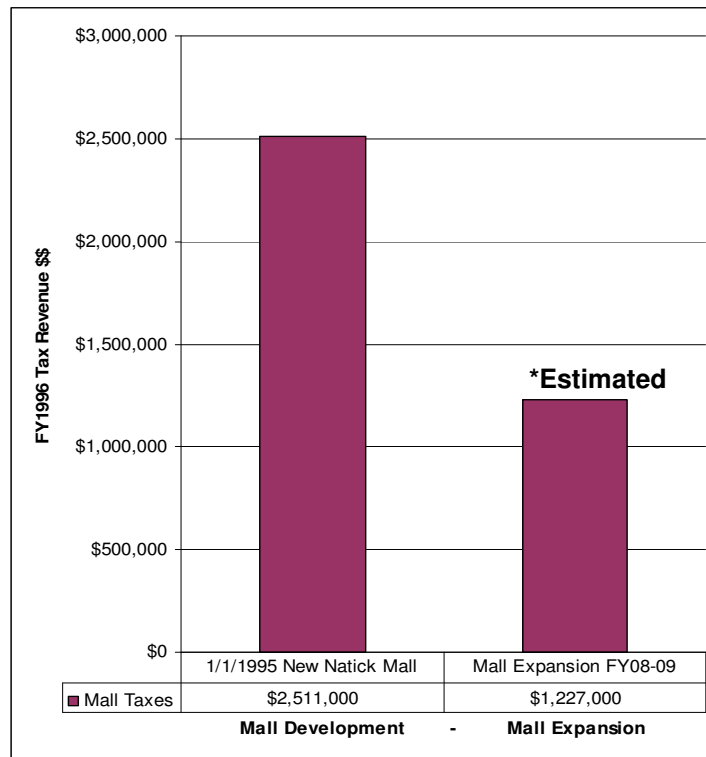
Figure 36. Tax Valuation in Natick by Property Class, Fiscal Year 1986-2006

	Residential	Commercial	Industrial	CIP % of Valuation	Total
1986	\$ 1,113 M	\$ 291 M	\$ 93 M	26.6%	\$ 1,525 M
1990	\$ 2,094 M	\$ 491 M	\$ 147 M	24.1%	\$ 2,773 M
1995	\$ 1,743 M	\$ 406 M	\$ 44 M	22.1%	\$ 2,245 M
2000	\$ 2,234 M	\$ 763 M	\$ 34 M	28.0%	\$ 3,101 M
2006	\$ 4,822 M	\$ 1,143 M	\$ 60 M	21.0%	\$ 6,105 M
Change over Period					
1986-1990	+ \$ 981 M	+ \$ 199 M	+ \$ 53 M	-2.5%	+ \$ 1,248 M
1990-1995	- \$ 351 M	- \$ 84 M	- \$ 102 M	-2.0%	- \$ 528 M
1995-2000	+ \$ 490 M	+ \$ 356 M	- \$ 10 M	5.8%	+ \$ 856 M
2000-2006	+ \$ 2,588 M	+ \$ 380 M	+ \$ 26 M	-6.9%	+ \$ 3,004 M
	CIP % of Valuation	Residential	Commercial	Industrial	Total
1986	26.6%	\$ 1,113 M	\$ 291 M	\$ 93 M	\$ 1,525 M
1990	24.1%	\$ 2,094 M	\$ 491 M	\$ 147 M	\$ 2,773 M
1995	22.1%	\$ 1,743 M	\$ 406 M	\$ 44 M	\$ 2,245 M
2000	28.0%	\$ 2,234 M	\$ 763 M	\$ 34 M	\$ 3,101 M
2006	21.0%	\$ 4,822 M	\$ 1,143 M	\$ 60 M	\$ 6,105 M
Change over Period					
1986-1990	-2.5%	+ \$ 981 M	+ \$ 199 M	+ \$ 53 M	+ \$ 1,248 M
1990-1995	-2.0%	- \$ 351 M	- \$ 84 M	- \$ 102 M	- \$ 528 M
1995-2000	5.8%	+ \$ 490 M	+ \$ 356 M	- \$ 10 M	+ \$ 856 M
2000-2006	-6.9%	+ \$ 2,588 M	+ \$ 380 M	+ \$ 26 M	+ \$ 3,004 M

Data Source: MA Department of Revenue

The ongoing expansion of the Natick Mall will result in a major boost to the commercial tax base of the Town of Natick. It is expected that the current expansion will result in an increase of approximately \$1.2 million annual local in tax revenue when completed in 2008. The expansion of the Natick Mall that took place in the mid-1990's resulted in an increase of approximately \$2.5 million in local taxes. The town used the past increase in funds to make up for the smaller contribution of state aid and also to undertake improvements to public infrastructure, building a new town hall, library, public safety building, and improvements to five schools. (See the expenditures section for how the maintenance of these new buildings will impact town finances.)

Figure 37. Comparison of Natick Mall Property Taxes (1995 Tax Dollar Basis)



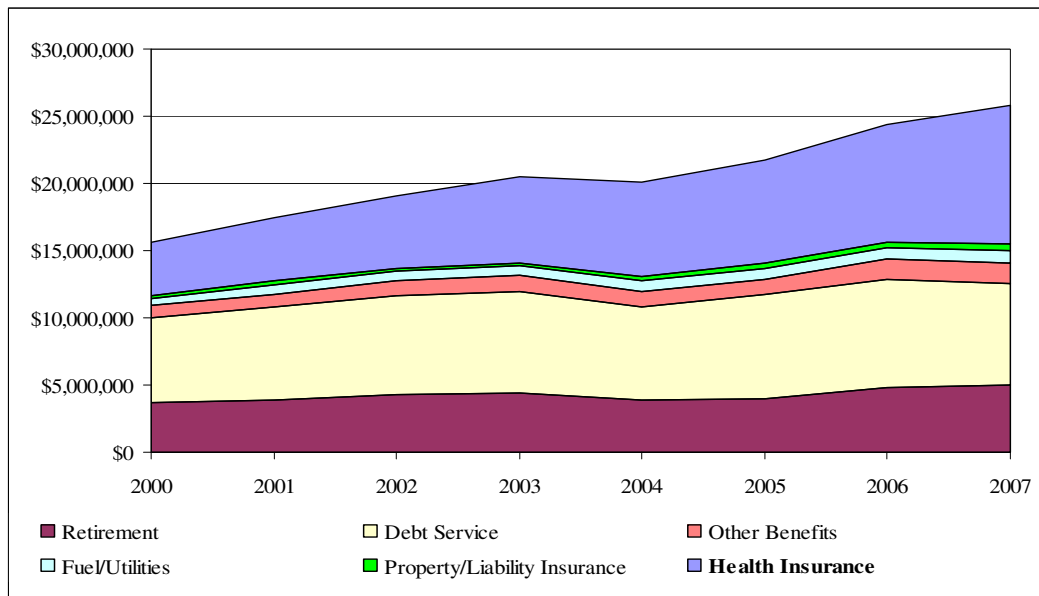
Data Source: "FY07- FY11 Budget Presentation" Natick Town Meeting, April 2006 by Philip Lemnios, Town Administrator

Expenditures

Expenditures comprise eight categories: Operating Budget, Insurances, Pensions, Debt & Interest, Reserve Fund, Capital Improvements, Stabilization and Other. The FY2007 budget was deemed a "no frills maintenance budget" by the town's administrator as the town struggles to maintain the current level of staffing and services, while mandatory costs outpace the growth in revenue. The largest category of growth in mandatory costs was insurance, which increased by 150% since 2000. Insurance includes health insurance, property insurance, workers compensation, and unemployment insurance. The largest increase was for health insurance for municipal employees and retirees, and their families, a substantial increase in cost experienced by many other municipalities in Massachusetts. In addition, insurance to cover town-owned property also increased.

Despite expanding mandatory costs, the town has been able to maintain its level of services due to its hard working staff and heavy reliance on public/private partnerships and volunteers. The Town of Natick government is on a lean operating budget, only anticipating a 3% increase in town department resources to compensate for the growth in the mandatory fixed-cost items. In FY 07 the operating budget was 68% of the town's total budget with insurance (14%), retirement pensions (5.6%), debt and reserve funds (8.9%), and general government (4.5%) making up the rest of the expenditures.

Figure 38. Trends in Mandatory Cost Items

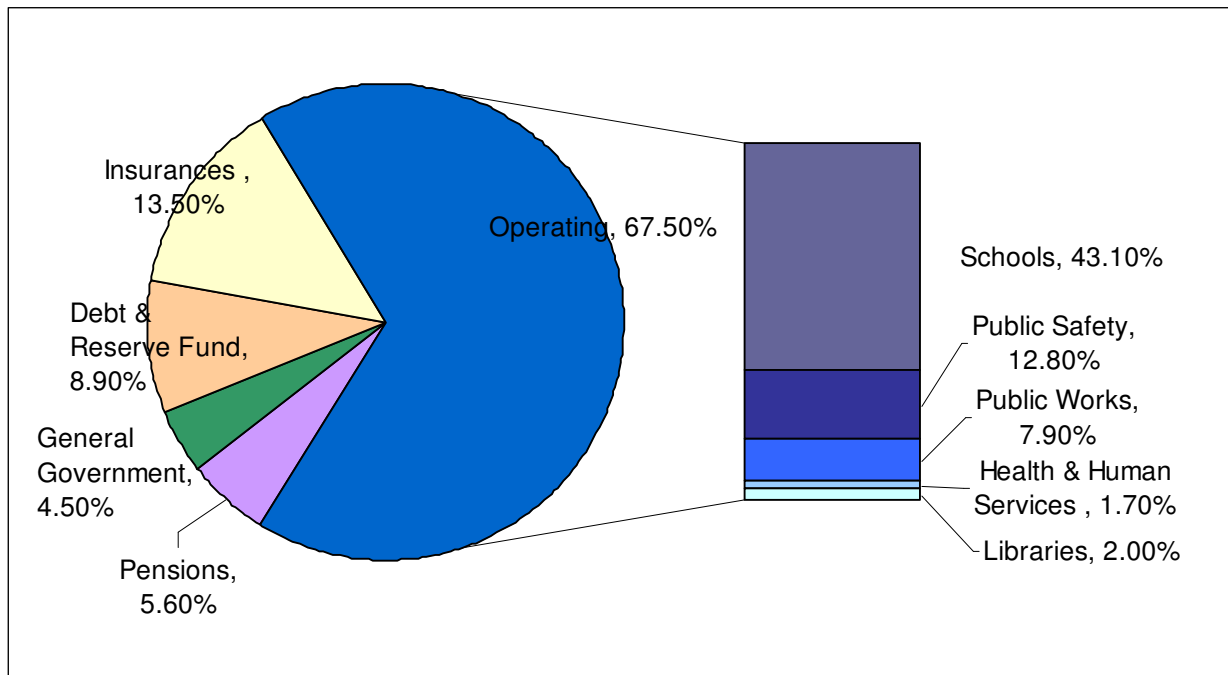


Data Source: "FY07- FY11 Budget Presentation" Natick Town Meeting, April 2006 by Philip Lemnios, Town Administrator

This small increase in departmental budgets does not alleviate the pressure on departments that are understaffed with increasing work loads. Understaffing of departments results in a limited ability to innovate and respond to needs as the town's population continues to change and grow. As Natick becomes an increasingly desirable place for residents and businesses to settle there is increasing demand on town departments, specifically departments such as schools, community development, public safety, and the boards of health that involve permitting, board involvement, staff consultations and inspections. The community development department in particular has a smaller staff size than towns of comparable size and population.

The town has invested the monies from the Natick Mall expansion projects in several capital projects: a new town hall, a new public safety building a new library, and improvements to Brown, Lilja, and Bennett-Hemenway.. The town borrowed against its stabilization fund in advance of the annual levy payments from the Natick Mall expansion. A cost of \$3.5 million annually is budgeted in until at least FY2011 for capital improvement bond payments. In the coming years, Natick will be paying back its stabilization fund with the Natick Mall expansion money, but the costs associated with these large capital improvement projects will on-going. Increases in maintenance and property insurance are two examples of on-going costs of these buildings.

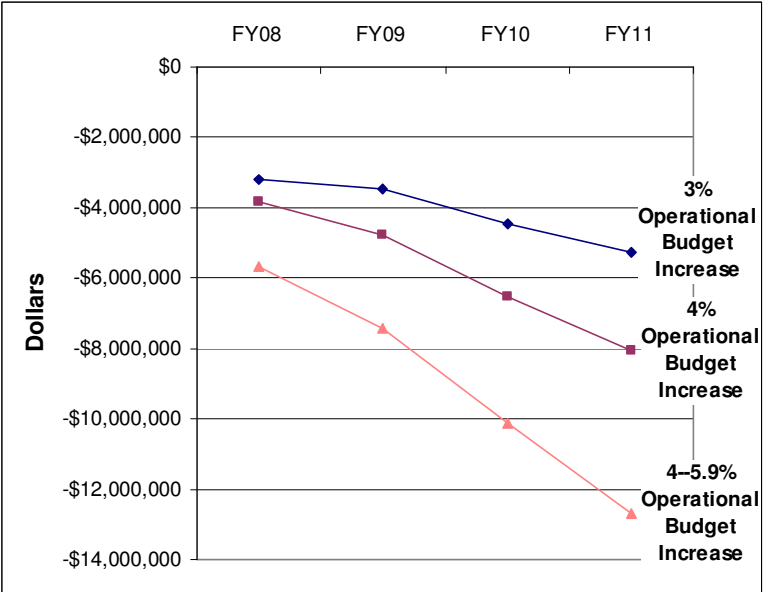
Figure 39. Expenditure Summary FY 2007



Data Source: MAPC generated chart from "FY07- FY11 Budget Presentation" Natick Town Meeting, April 2006 by Philip Lemnios, Town Administrator and "Town Administrator's Budget Message FY 07- January 9, 2006"

These ongoing capital costs, combined with increasing insurance premiums and reasonable assumptions about increases in the town's operational budget, may likely put the town of Natick in a deficit position. Natick will be facing a basic decision to either increase its revenue or decrease its expenditures. In the near future it is likely that the resident will face a decision for a Proposition 2 ½ override to increase revenues or a cut in the town's level of services.

Figure 40. Projected Natick Deficit Position



Data Source: "FY07- FY11 Budget Presentation" Natick Town Meeting, April 2006 by Philip Lemnios, Town Administrator

Physical Plan and Zoning

Overview:

The development patterns of a community are the result of physical land characteristics (e.g., soil conditions, location of wetlands), historical activities (e.g., construction of railroads and highways), the presence of critical infrastructure (e.g., what areas of the community are served by municipal water and sewer), local plans and their implementation (e.g., zoning and other bylaws) and state laws. Communities seeking to change their future development patterns can change local bylaws, seek changes to state laws, and invest in public infrastructure improvements (including open space protection) to impact growth patterns.

Natural Resources and Historical Land Use

The Town History and Context section of this document describes the historical growth and development patterns of Natick. The more recent growth patterns are shown on Map 1, Historic Land Uses, which illustrates the existing land uses within the town as of 1999. At that time, the mix of land uses included approximately 3% agriculture, 29% natural undeveloped lands, 3% industrial, 6% commercial, 2% open lands (such as power lines), 5% institutional or recreational, 8% higher density residential, 29% medium density residential and 10% lower density residential.

Map 1 also illustrates the areas that have been developed between 1971 and 1999. The lands developed for residential, commercial and industrial uses during that 28 year period constitute an approximate 17% increase in developed land. As can be seen on Map 1 and also on Map 5, Changing Land Use, the majority of the land was used for residential purposes. Map 5 also illustrates significant developments that have been approved or constructed since 1999.

Map 2, Natural Resources, also shows the existing land uses as a base, but adds the locations of significant aquifer areas, wildlife habitats and existing protected open space parcels. (Note that the wetlands and open space parcels are also shown on Map 4, Natick Open Space and Water Today.) Map 2 provides information to assist the town in deciding which additional areas should be purchased in order to meet the town's goals²⁵ of protecting municipal water resources, providing for trail and habitat connections between existing open spaces, and providing natural landscape for future residents of the town.

Map 3, Existing and Future Conditions, illustrates the existing zoning for the Town of Natick. According to the data in the Natick Buildout Analysis, conducted by MAPC under EOE A guidelines in 2000, approximately 93% of the Town of Natick is zoned for residential development of one form or another. This includes the 33 acres of the downtown which are zoned for "Downtown Mixed Use" which would include both residential and commercial components. The remainder of the town (approximately 7%) is zoned for commercial, industrial, hospital, and administrative and professional uses.

The Buildout Analysis estimated that approximately 1,400 acres of Natick was not yet either developed or protected, and therefore available for potential development.²⁶ Approximately 98% of this land was zoned for residential purposes, and was estimated to yield a maximum of 1,681 residential units based upon the by-right zoning. The limited amount of vacant Highway Mixed Use and Industrial area was estimated to yield up to 455,000 square feet of future commercial, office or industrial space based upon the zoning regulations and the types of development being constructed at that time. The buildout analysis also illustrated the locations of 34 residential developments that had been approved for construction during the 1990's.

²⁵ See Town of Natick Open Space and Recreation Plan 2002.

²⁶ Note that the 1400 acre figure differs slightly from the projected land use change figures on Map 3, Existing and Future Conditions due to wetlands, which will not change land use, but which were partially calculated into the land area for buildout analysis because wetlands can constitute a portion of the land area of a lot which is the minimum required for development under zoning.

New and Proposed Development Since Buildout Analysis

Map 5, Changing Land Use, illustrates the major developments and redevelopments that have been proposed since the Buildout Analysis was conducted. Several patterns are evident from this data. First, although there was little land left for commercial/industrial development at the time of the buildout, this type of development has continued in Natick, using previously-developed lands in redevelopment projects. The largest of these proposals is for the 596,000 square foot Natick Mall expansion. Secondly, although the buildout analysis indicated the residential development that would be allowed by-right under the zoning then in force, a substantial amount of the recently-approved or proposed residential development is either in the form of special permit developments associated with the HOOP District as part of town-planned downtown revitalization, or in the Chapter 40B developments being proposed for vacant lands that are zoned for single family residential developments. (Note that the Natick Mall proposal also included 213 residential units.) This residential development, in close proximity to the previously approved Cloverleaf 40B development, adds a substantial residential component to an area of town which was previously non-residential in nature.

Two additional large 40B developments (Hunter's Woods and South Natick Hills) are proposed in undeveloped areas in the southern portion of town. As is also noted in the more extensive discussion of Chapter 40B in the Population and Housing section of this report, the town has very limited ability to control Chapter 40B developments until the town achieves the state goal of 10% affordable housing units. Additional Chapter 40B proposals are likely on the remaining undeveloped lands in town. However, as is noted below, the town is taking several proactive steps to address the need for affordable housing and to gain additional control over the location of denser housing developments.

Proactive Changes to Local Zoning

Since the time of the Buildout Analysis, additional areas have been converted from industrial zoning to residential zoning. According to the community development director, this is to enable re-use of previously industrial sites for more appropriate redevelopment purposes.

One of the more innovative components is the Housing Overlay Option Plan (HOOP). These zoning regulations apply to five designated areas within the downtown, where public transit is available. The purpose of the zoning is "to create overlay districts in selected areas of Town in order to enhance the public welfare by increasing production of dwelling units affordable to persons and households of low and moderate income in a manner consistent with the character of the downtown area." Within any development under the HOOP regulations, at least 15% of the total number of dwelling units must meet the affordability requirements for households earning less than 80% of regional median income and households earning between 80 and 120% of regional median income. Allowed densities of residential units range from 12 per acre in HOOP II to 17 per acre in HOOP I, although there is a special permit procedure for limited bonus density if the development meets special criteria (including whether the development "offers the Town a landmark project with area-wide benefits"). A significant commitment to open space, including public spaces, must be incorporated into the HOOP project designs.

The HOOP program differs from Chapter 40B developments²⁷ in that the Town has proactively set the locations where it wants additional residential density, it allows for developments with less affordability (15% in HOOP vs. 25% for 40B), and includes an expansion of the definition of affordability to include households earning between 80 and 120% of regional median income (not included in 40B).

The HOOP program is similar to Chapter 40R in establishing the locations for additional growth and in establishing design review guidelines, but differs from 40R because of the Special Permit process for HOOP and the more limited affordability requirements included in the HOOP regulations.

The Town of Natick developed the smart growth HOOP concept prior to the state passage of Chapter 40R. In order to continue to promote higher density in smart growth locations (to promote economic

²⁷ See Population and Housing section of this report for more detailed description of Chapter 40B and Chapter 40R.

revitalization and to eventually bring Chapter 40B developments under town control) the town is pursuing approval of a Chapter 40R Overlay Zone for the Natick Paperboard site on North Main Street. As is noted in the Population and Housing section of this report, the state also provides financial incentives for a community to approve Chapter 40R districts, including a commitment to assist in paying education costs associated with families in the 40R district (under Chapter 40S).

Additional Implications of Smart Growth Zoning

As noted in the Population and Housing section of this report, changing the town zoning to promote a diversity of housing types, including multi-family units within a village environment and within walking distance to transit, can result in meeting a broader housing demand and the opportunity to promote the community to the younger demographic which is currently under-represented,

Zoning for single family development results in an estimated 10 vehicle trips per day per household. By zoning for multi-family units in a walkable area, preferably served by transit, the number of vehicle trips per day can be reduced as more of the trips are completed by walking, bicycling or transit. Ensuring the walkability of neighborhoods by building sidewalks and/or multipurpose trails, and by establishing neighborhood-based retail to provide for local destinations within walking/biking distance, can also reduce vehicle trips²⁸.

The town is working to establish a trail network, and already has the beginnings of a sidewalk network (see trail map on town web site at

(http://natickma.virtualltownhall.net/Public_Documents/NatickMA_Commdev/walkmapE.pdf).

Connections of these trails and sidewalks to destinations (schools, neighborhood retail, downtown, parks and recreation sites, etc.) can lead to a more walkable community with the potential for decreased traffic.²⁹

In the case of undeveloped lands farther from village centers, future development can also incorporate smart growth concepts. The Natick zoning bylaw provides the following rationale for encouraging cluster development: "To permit more economical and efficient use of residential land than may be accomplished through standard subdivision development by: protecting the existing character of the landscape, introducing some variety into residential development, and preserving for the Town more open space for water supply; flood protection; woodland, field and wetland habitat; conservation; and recreation." Developments proposed under this cluster provision can also provide open space and trail links to connect the neighborhoods to destinations such as parks, schools or village retail areas.

²⁸ A study of mixed use neighborhoods in the Seattle area found that walk trips as a share of all trips were roughly double in the mixed use neighborhoods compared to their surrounding area. (Source: Edward McCormack, G. Scott Rutherford, and Martina G. Wilkinson, "Travel Impacts of Mixed Land Use Neighborhoods in Seattle, Washington", *Transportation Research Record 1780* (2001), p. 29))

²⁹ Studies have shown that presence of sidewalks in neighborhood can lead to a 14% decrease in vehicle trips. (Source: Reid Ewing and Robert Cervero, "Travel and the Built Environment: A Synthesis", *Transportation Research Record 1780* (2001), p. 110-111)

Recreation and Cultural Amenities

Overview:

Natick is rich in recreational, cultural and educational resources. The varying landscape and cultural activities act not only as a resource for residents, but also surrounding communities. As Natick looks to grow in the future, improving recreational and cultural resource will be important to attract the young professionals and families who participate in the knowledge economy. The community is already thinking about the value of recreational and cultural resources. At a recent charrette about Natick Center, participants identified cultural amenities as an asset to capitalize on for future development:

*The people of Natick envision downtown Natick as a vibrant and diverse center for arts, commerce, and cultural resources. The vision includes preservation of the historical character of the downtown, affordability for residents and local businesses and accessibility to the Center through a wide range of transportation options .*³⁰

Natick's continual investment in its recreational and cultural resources will serve to keep the community vibrant and attractive to young families and older residents alike. Map 6, Recreational, Cultural and Municipal Amenities, shows the location of various recreational and arts and culture resources in the community.

Recreational and Natural Resources

The town has made efforts to support and improve its recreational and cultural amenities. The Natick Parks and Recreation Department manages over 30 parks and fields and offers a comprehensive year-round, high-quality indoor and outdoor recreational activities for town residents (260 recreational programs). The department has also expanded its programs by entering into creative partnerships with non-profit organizations, allowing it to offer programs beyond what is offered by many other towns in the area. Examples of these innovative partnerships include Camp Arrowhead, a camp that strengthens self-esteem and interaction with peers, the William Chase Arena skating facility, the Natick Community Organic Farm and the Sassamon Trace Golf Course (more information on greenspace and natural resources is available in the Geo-Physical and regional Setting chapter and the Town Services chapter). The successful community activities that occur throughout the year also happen in collaboration with the various non-profit and arts organizations that are strong in Natick. Community events include: Father/Daughter Valentine's Day dance, the family triathlon, Springfest and Harvestfest celebrations – and Natick Days, an event that draws thousands of participants from Natick and surrounding towns. In addition, there are over 100 Little League teams, and over 100 youth soccer teams.³¹ Natick is also home to the Walnut Hill School, an internationally recognized performing arts high school.

Natick is fortunate to have two active and publicly-accessible farms in its town limits. The Natick Community Organic farm is a non-profit, certified organic farm providing productive open space and food to the public and year-round, hands-on education for all ages. The Belkin Family Outlook Farm is also available for pick-your-own and family activities. These farms, and the farmers' market on the Natick Town Common, provide ready access to locally grown foods. They are important to the health of Natick's residents, contribute to the food security of the region and help to educate Natick's children about food production and life cycles.

³⁰ "A Shared Vision of Natick Center" Results of a Community Charrette co-sponsored by Natick Center Associates and the Community Development Office of the Town of Natick, **September 2004**.

³¹ Department of Public Works section of the Town of Natick's Annual Report 2003.

Arts and Cultural Resources

Natick has 12 cultural establishments that provide roughly 134 jobs. These include traditional non-profits, arts organizations, independent artist and art dealers, and related, alternative arts establishments, such as book stores, music stores and video rental stores. There are proportionally fewer traditional arts establishments and more alternative arts establishments as a share of total business establishments in Natick than within the metropolitan region.

Figure 41. Arts and Culture Establishments, 2003*

	Natick		MAPC Region	
	Number	# per 1000	Number	# per 1000
Arts Establishments	1	0.7	266	3.0
Alternative Arts Establishments	8	5.9	426	4.8
Other Arts Establishments	3	2.2	242	2.7
Total Arts Establishments	12	8.8	934	10.4
Arts Employment	31	1.5	6,330	3.8
Alternative Arts Employment	99	4.9	4,924	2.9
Other Arts Employment	4	0.2	631	0.4
Total Arts Employment	134	6.6	11,885	7.0

*Does not include educational institution related art programs

Data Source: Arts and Culture Indicators Project Data (ACIP) Urban Institute analysis US Census County Business Patterns

“Arts Establishments” include theater companies, dance theaters, musical groups and artists, historic sites, nature parks and similar institutions. “Alternative Arts Establishments” include book, recorded music and video stores. “Other Arts Establishments” include independent artists, performers or art dealers.

Figure 42. Arts and Culture Non-profits

	Total (\$)	Share (%)
Revenues		
Total	613,161	
Performing Arts	548,588	89.47
Arts, Culture & Humanities	64,573	10.53
Expenditures		
Total	562,945	
Performing Arts	449,564	79.86
Arts, Culture & Humanities	113,381	20.14
Contributions		
Total	179,709	
Performing Arts	121,607	67.67
Arts, Culture & Humanities	58,102	32.33

Data Source: National Center for Charitable Statistics Database. Urban Institute analysis of IRS National Taxonomy of Exempt Entity codes.

As you can see in Figure 42, according to the National Center for Charitable Statistics, cultural non-profits in Natick had a total revenue of just over \$600,000 and a total expenditure of just over \$550,000 in 2003. Contributions to non-profit organizations from people, businesses, and other organizations in Natick total just under \$200,000. The majority of revenues and expenditures are generated by one large arts

organization, The Center for Arts in Natick (TCAN). TCAN is not Natick's only arts organization, but it is the largest (a list of additional arts-related non-profits from the New England Cultural Council is included in the Appendix) and is worth discussing in more detail as it has strengthened Natick's cultural resources.

The Center for Arts in Natick (TCAN) works to enhance, inspire and benefit the community through the arts. TCAN provides a cultural center to the MetroWest Boston region, where national and emerging artists present 350 performances, literary events, art classes and exhibitions annually in an environment that brings together individuals, families, children and seniors. The Town of Natick along with interested residents and TCAN recently collaborated to turn an old fire house into a permanent Arts Center, successfully anchoring Natick's downtown as an arts destination.

The Morse Institute Library in Natick center is also a cultural and educational focal point for the Natick community. In 1997, the library expanded and modernized to provide more meeting room space and shelving for books and electronic services, such as access to the internet and other multimedia. The library offered over 1,200 programs in 2005, ranging from musical performances, book talks, and story hours to a variety of training classes. Over 500,000 individuals took advantage of the Library's rich resources in 2005. The Bacon Free Library in South Natick is home to the Natural Historical and Society Museum and offers additional literary resources and programs to the residents of Natick.

Public natural resources, community events and cultural organizations are important as they not only increase the desirability and economic viability of the town but also improve the quality of life for the participants, help facilitate a common community identity and create opportunities for interaction for community members who would not normally have a chance to meet.

Town Services

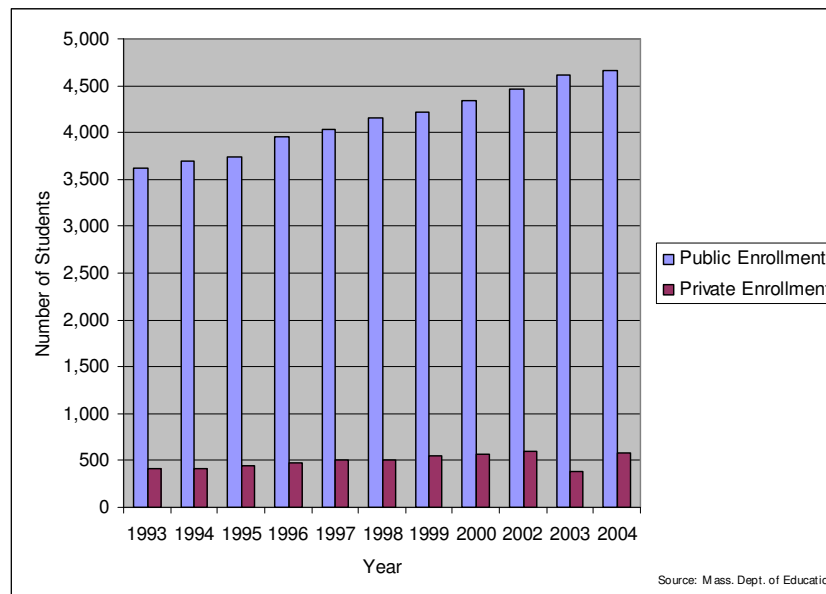
Overview:

Natick offers a variety of services to its residents and businesses, from core services such as public schooling, police and fire to forward-looking additions such as the Senior Center and state-of-the-art Library. The periodic influx of resources from the Natick Mall expansions and the growth of the residential market in town have helped Natick to expand its services beyond those offered by many of its peers. These services maintain a high quality of life in Natick and will be critical in attracting new residents and businesses in the future. However, in coming years Natick will be challenged to keep this level of services. (See the Town Government and Finances section for more details.)

Education

Natick presently has just over 4,500 children between the ages of 5 and 18. The number of children in Natick that go to school has been increasing since the 1990's as the "echo boomers" (the baby boomers' children) reach school age and move into the school system. This trend has been mirrored in the increasing numbers of children in the Natick Public Schools. The schools in Natick and the various associated programs offer a wide range of curriculum suited to the needs of a variety of students. This will be important because Natick Schools not only have more students, but also have students from an increasingly diverse set of backgrounds. (See the Population and Housing section for more details.).

Figure 43. Natick Public versus Private School Enrollment, 1993-2004



Currently, Natick public schools have 4,392 students, with 574 in private schools, and 29 are home schooled. Natick sends 99 students to other public schools outside of Natick and receives 72 children from other school districts. Seventy-four students take advantage of the vocational and agricultural programs. Currently the Natick schools have 328 students that participate in the free and reduced lunch program. The number of children that participate in the English Language Learner program is 57 and the number of students that need special education is approximately 700. Six private schools are located in Natick, including a Montessori school and the Walnut Hill School, a fine arts high school.

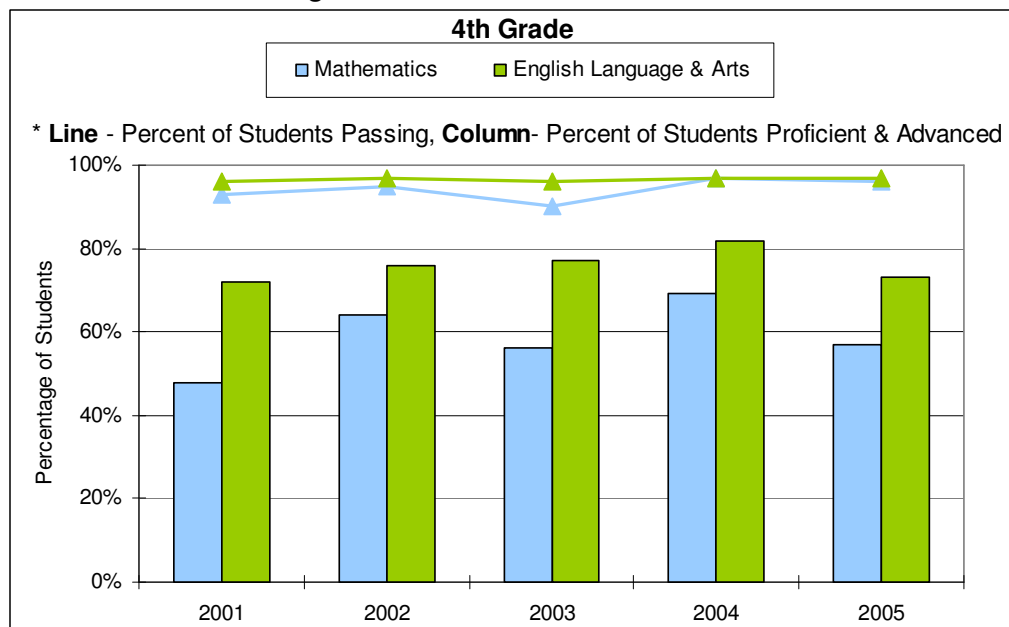
Figure 44. Natick Educational Placement, 2006

Grade	Attend Natick Schools	Vocational & Agricultural	SPED Collaboratives	Natick Residents Attending Other Public Schools	SPED Private Placements	Private School Attendance	Home Schooled	Students Who Attend Natick Schools & Live Out of Natick*
K	425					39		
1	366				1	37	5	1
2	409			1		34	4	1
3	374			1	3	30	3	
4	362		1	2	4	36	2	1
5	367		3	1	2	43	4	8
6	304			32	2	43	4	10
7	307		1	36	2	45	1	2
8	319		1	11	3	51	2	4
9	284	22	1	5	2	55	2	12
10	310	15	1	5	9	51	1	7
11	282	24	1	2	7	55		9
12	283	13	3	3	3	55	1	17
Total	4392	74	12	99	38	574	29	72

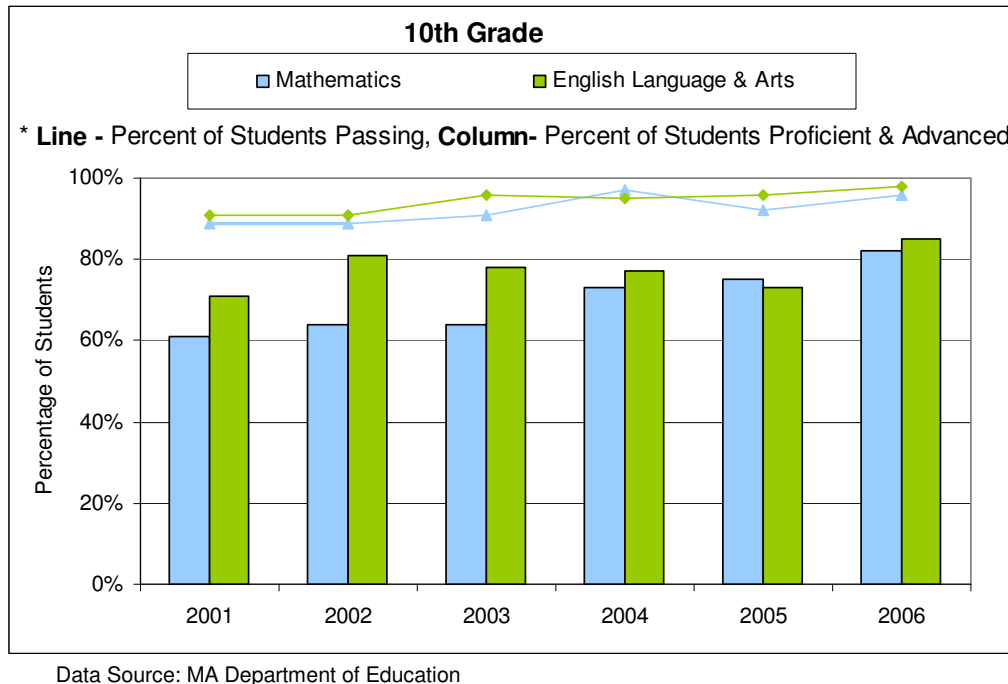
* includes METCO

Data Source: Natick School Department

Figure 45. Natick's 4TH AND 10TH Grade MCAS Results*



*4th grade 2006 MCAS scores had not yet been released at the time of this report



Natick's school system has been generally successful in meeting the challenge of the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS). The number of students who pass the MCAS has improved since 2001 for both 4th and 10th grades, although there was a slight decline in 2005 for the 10th graders in the Math portion of the exam. There was a gradual decline between 2002 and 2005 in the number of 10th graders who scored Advanced or Proficient in English and Language Arts, but this trend turned around in 2006. The Math portion of the test for these same 10th graders has shown steady increase in the number of students scoring Advanced or Proficient. Although the test is quite controversial, and many question whether it is an appropriate measurement of student achievement, it is considered important by the Federal government. The federal No Child Left Behind Act stipulates that all children must be proficient on statewide standardized test by 2014. The state also continues to require that all students pass the MCAS in order to graduate from high school.

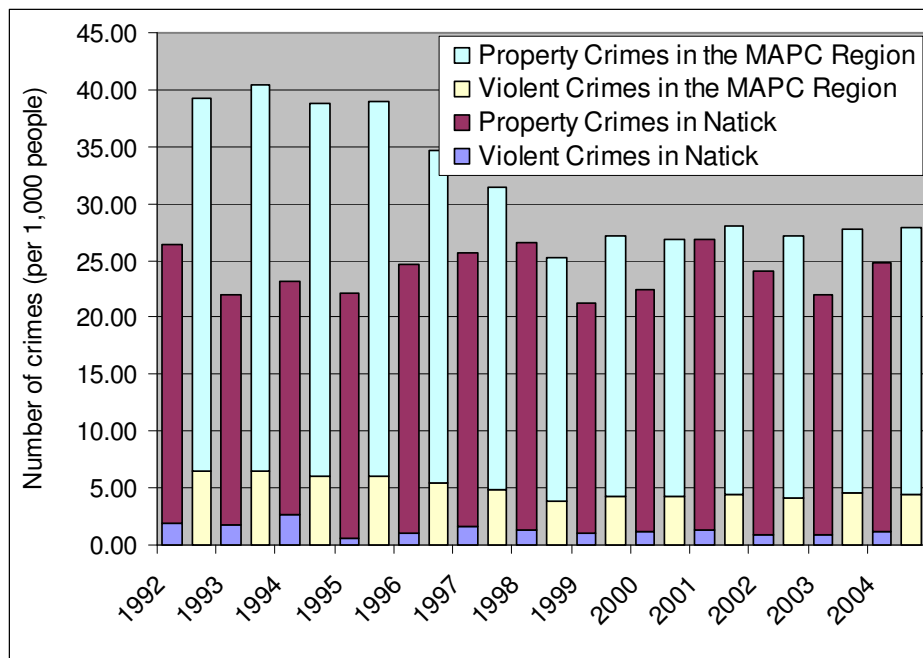
Public Safety

The Natick Police and Fire Departments provide some of the most visible services to the public. These departments not only work to address public safety issues on a daily basis, but more and more they are involved in planning and training for natural disasters and large scale incidents. Natick is a member of the Northeast Homeland Security Regional Advisory Council (NERAC), which coordinates the allocation of federal funds for training and preparedness. MAPC serves as fiduciary agent and planning staff for NERAC. Natick is also now participating in the Pre-Disaster Mitigation (PDM) Project to help the town to cope with the impacts of a natural disaster such as flooding or earthquake. MAPC operates the PDM program, funded by FEMA, for communities in the MetroWest subregion.

The following sections outline the services offered by the public safety departments and a snapshot of the community's demand for those services.

The number of crimes in Natick has fluctuated over the years and does not follow the region-wide trends that often correspond with economic cycles. Natick has a lower proportion of violent crimes than the region as a whole (roughly 3-5% versus 15-16%). In 2004, Natick had 798 crimes with the majority being property crimes. Although this crime rate is slightly higher than Natick's peer groups, it is likely explained by the increased traffic and activity related to the Natick Mall and other retail establishments.

Figure 46. Number of Crimes for Natick and the Region, 1992-2004



Data Source: MA State Police

The Natick Police Department has switched to community policing in order to better maintain its mission: *To maintain the peace, protect life and property, and provide professional law enforcement and crime prevention services.* Community policing involves strong communication with the residents of Natick through various neighborhood associations, the Board of Selectmen, and concerned and active citizenry. The Natick Police department logged more than 18,000 calls for service and issued 5,000 vehicular citations during 2005. The department also handles a wide variety of domestic calls related to animal control. The nature of crime has changed with the times and Natick's investigative services division has kept pace, meeting an increasing caseload that is related to consumer fraud via the internet or ATM cards.

Natick's fire department responded to 4,621 calls for service in 2005, a 7% increase since 2003. In addition, the department also monitors and issues permits related to fire codes, issuing 1,439 permits last year.

Figure 47. Record of Fire Calls, 2003-2005

Type	2003	2004	2005	2003-2005 Average
Structure Fires	42	27	17	29
Vehicle Fires	29	9	12	17
Accdt. Alarms/Good intent	385	525	501	470
Forest, Brush, Trash	70	34	56	53
Mutual Aid Rendered (fire)	53	61	56	57
Mutual Aid Received (fire)	18	27	23	23
Mutual Aid Rendered (amb.)	99	102	105	102
Mutual Aid Received (amb.)	92	87	77	85
False Alarms	75	28	51	51
Ambulance Calls	2517	2449	2822	2596
Public Assist. Investigations	910	982	901	931
Totals	4290	4331	4621	4414

Data Source: Town of Natick Annual Report 2007

Improvements in operations, and training in new methods, are always a sign of a well-run department. Over the past few years, the Natick police department has invested its time and money on a new Computerized Record Information Model Entry System (C.R.I.M.E.S.), which allows most of the patrol vehicles to have access to the state and national driver vehicle and criminal information systems. The police and fire departments continue to improve their new communications system. Both departments have been developing interagency cooperation agreements and training on the Federal National Incident Management System (NIMS). This training culminated in a large-scale disaster drill staged at the Natick Army labs.

As noted above, current development in Natick such as the Natick Mall expansion and the additional high-rise residential units will place an added burden on the Natick Police Department and the Natick Fire Department. These developments, coupled with a growing number of elderly residents with emergency needs, are expected to cause an increased demand on the public safety system.

Senior Services

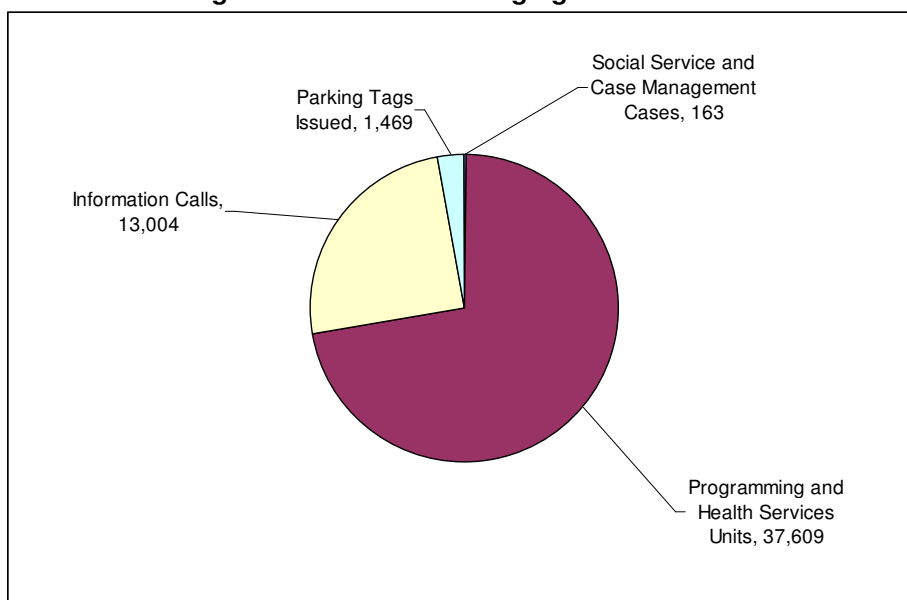
As the baby boomers age and Natick's senior population swells, it will be extremely important for Natick to continue its senior services. The future of Natick will depend on helping seniors to age in place in the safety of their homes. The Council on Aging (COA) in Natick's Human Services Department works to do just that. The Council on Aging provides advocacy and support systems that empower older adults to maintain independence and improve their quality of life. The Council advocates for seniors in the areas of health, transportation, taxes, and affordable housing, and gathers information regarding recreational opportunities. The Council on Aging is only able to offer the level service that it does because of volunteers who offer their time. At the Kennedy Senior Center alone, it is estimated that volunteers donated 13,722 hours of time, equivalent to \$240, 821 of service to the town of Natick.³² Many professionals and agencies also donate in-kind services that further extend what the town is able to offer to its older residents.

The wellness programs and services constitute the bulk of the COA services focusing on support and case management to help elders age in their homes, provide information and assistance to families making decisions regarding elders, provide services to disabled of all ages, empower consumers and provide preventative health programming and educational, social and leisure opportunities for adults. As baby boomers age, many live a more active life style than seniors have before, and senior services will

³² Natick Town Report 2005

have to add programs to keep pace. The COA has responded to this trend by adding classes that include strength training and computer workshops.

Figure 48. Council on Aging Services Issued



Data Source: Town of Natick Annual Report 2007

Major programming activities also include transportation. Requests to COA for transportation services have doubled since last year and are currently above the capacity of volunteers. Taxi coupons are available to compensate and are funded through grants. In addition there are two existing bus services available to seniors, “The Ride”, and “The Neighborhood Bus” (more information on these services is in the Transportation section of this report). In the coming years it will be important to coordinate these resources and increase them. Due to the current development patterns, it is necessary to drive to most places in Natick. Ensuring mobility and access to services that seniors need will be critical as members of the aging population lose their ability to drive. (See the Physical Plan and Zoning section to better understand Natick’s development pattern and how Smart Growth may be another strategy to ensure future mobility for seniors.)

Natick is preparing for its increase in seniors and the change of services that are expected by the baby boomers as they age. The Town is planning to invest in a new senior center. This resource will be critical as Natick and other communities in the Boston region vie to keep the aging baby boomers in town and not lose them to other parts of the region or nation.

Traffic and Transportation

Overview:

Natick is rich in its transportation options. Only 18 miles away from Boston, Natick is uniquely positioned on the Massachusetts Turnpike (I-90), Route 9 and the commuter rail. The town also offers its own local bus service and provides a variety of opportunities for biking and walking.

Journey to Work:

The first travel demand most people have is the commute to work. The decennial census Journey-to-Work survey provides a wealth of information on travel patterns. The tables below show where those who live in Natick worked (in 2000 and in 1990), and where those who worked in Natick lived. More Natick residents work in Natick than in any other town. The nearby communities of Framingham, Wellesley, and Newton were prime sources of jobs and workers in both 2000 and 1990. Boston and Cambridge are also prime locations of jobs for Natick residents, but not as many Boston or Cambridge residents commute to Natick jobs. Connections to Marlborough have become much stronger between 1990 and 2000, as both jobs and workers have migrated to the Interstate 495 area.

Figure 49. Natick Residents - Where Do They Work? The Top 10 Communities³³

	2000		1990	
Natick Residents Working In:	# of workers	%	# of workers	%
Natick	4,018	22.75	4,615	26.41
Boston	2,988	16.92	2,747	15.72
Framingham	1,726	9.77	1,655	9.47
Wellesley	1,093	6.19	1,266	7.24
Newton	792	4.48	696	3.98
Cambridge	696	3.94	488	2.79
Waltham	688	3.90	674	3.86
Needham	428	2.42	391	2.24
Marlborough	235	1.33	--	--
Wayland	224	1.27	389	2.23
Weston	--	--	291	1.67
Total working residents	17,660		17,476	
Work in MAPC region	16,520	93.54	16,555	94.73
Work outside MAPC, but in Massachusetts	967	5.48	774	4.43

Data Source: US Census, Journey-to-Work

³³ Figure 49 includes 11 communities because the top ten communities were not the same in 1990 and 2000. Blanks for number of workers in Weston in 2000 and Marlborough in 1990 do not mean zero workers, but that these communities were not in the top ten communities in those years.

Figure 50. Natick Workers- Where Do They Live? The Top 10 Communities

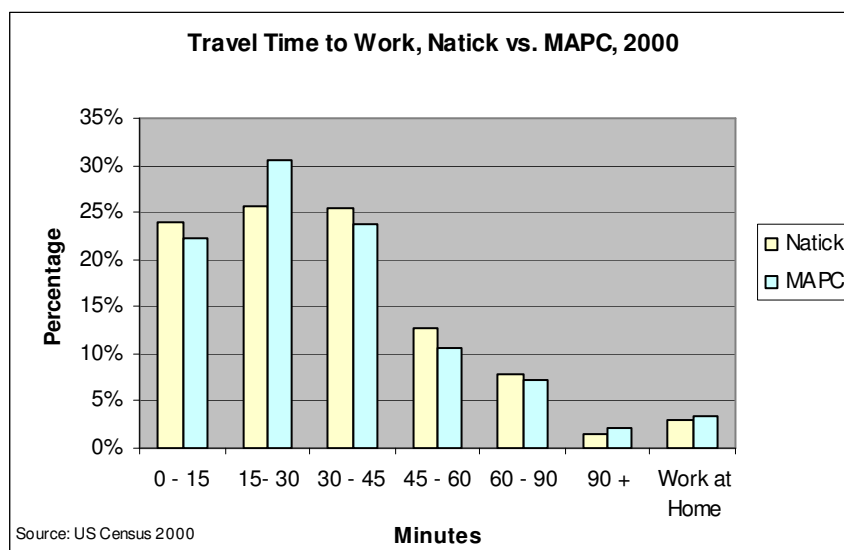
Natick Workers Living In:	2000		1990	
	# of residents	%	# of residents	%
Natick	4,018	19.71	4,615	23.62
Framingham	2,665	13.07	3,058	15.65
Boston	911	4.47	841	4.30
Marlborough	669	3.28	386	1.98
Ashland	533	2.61	480	2.46
Newton	486	2.38	515	2.64
Worcester	403	1.98	351	1.80
Milford	391	1.92	430	2.20
Holliston	351	1.72	461	2.36
Franklin	344	1.69	352	1.80
Total Workers	20,384		19,538	
Commute from the MAPC Region	16,505	80.97	16,406	83.97
Commute from outside MAPC, but in Massachusetts	3,280	16.09	2,724	13.94

Data Source: US Census, Journey – to-Work

The above table also illustrates the trend of more employees commuting from outside of the MAPC region to jobs within the region. This may be due to lack of affordable housing within the region and/or a lack of workers with the appropriate skills living in the region.

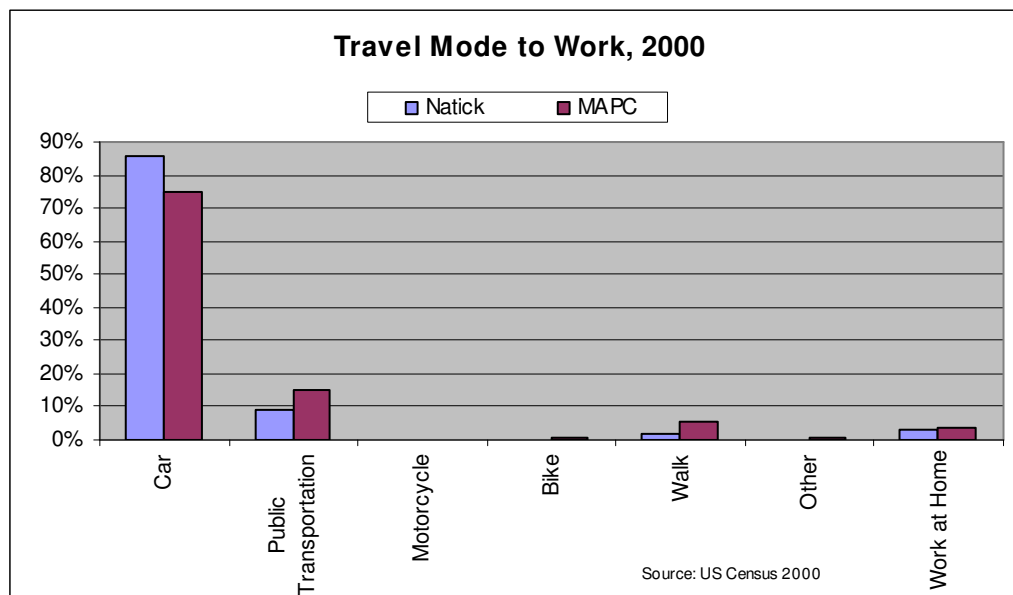
To get to work, Natick residents take both less and more time to get to work than other residents in the MAPC region. The high numbers of residents working in Natick allows almost 25% of all trips to be less than 15 minutes. But, as the figure below shows, 48% spend more than a half-hour traveling to work. Almost 10% spend over an hour. As jobs scatter around the region, commute times have risen dramatically.

Figure 51. Travel Time to Work, Natick vs. MAPC, 2000



Over 85% of Natick residents drive to work. The availability of good commuter rail service to communities where many Natick residents work (Wellesley, Newton, Boston), allow 9% of all residents to take the train to work. Very few residents walked or biked to work in 2000 (2.0%, down from 4.9% in 1990).

Figure 52. Travel Mode to Work Natick vs. MAPC, 2000



Transit

MBTA commuter rail service is provided on the Worcester line, between Worcester and South Station in Boston. There are two stations in Natick, in Natick Center and West Natick (on Route 135 / West Central Street). Scheduled travel times from Natick Center to South Station are 33-36 minutes, West Natick 38-41 minutes. There is no MBTA parking in Natick Center, and only 178 auto parking spaces at West Natick, plus 5 bicycle parking spaces. The West Natick parking lot is typically full by 7 AM on weekdays.³⁴

The most recent ridership counts are shown below. More riders board in Natick on weekdays and Saturdays than any other community along this line.

³⁴ Congestion Management System 2004 report, CTPS.

Figure 53. Commuter Rail Boardings

Station	Weekday	Saturday	Sunday
Worcester	927	320	299
Grafton	542	90	114
Westborough	562	71	74
Southborough	559	76	100
Ashland	616	77	57
Framingham	1374	329	280
West Natick	1067	171	128
Natick	799	170	101
Wellesley Square	784	122	106
Wellesley Hills	471	53	37
Wellesley Farm	354	43	18
Auburndale	332	38	58
West Newton	267	39	53
Newtonville	371	64	68
Yawkey	15	2	2
Back Bay	7	0	4
TOTAL	9047	1665	1500

Data Source: Central Transportation Staff, Counts from 6-9th April 2006

The town also operates the Natick Neighborhood Bus. Two buses offer hourly service on two fixed routes in the town, and to Shopper's World. A third bus serves residents and reverse commuters during early morning and evening hours to meet the downtown commuter train. The route includes "neighborhood request stops" and can be requested in advance by calling a dispatcher. This service is handicap accessible, but does not provide door to door service. A van has been added for a grocery shopping program for door-to-door service for disabled and elderly Natick residents who are unable to use the neighborhood bus. The Natick Neighborhood bus had 3,561 riders in October 2002 (the most recent data available) with 1,743 on the Northeast route, 1,818 on the Southwest. Almost 75% of these riders were seniors. A recent Boston Region MPO report, Suburban Transit Opportunities Study, <http://www.bostonmpo.org/bostonmpo/resources/Subtran/SuburbTransit.pdf> includes a case study of the Natick Neighborhood Bus. In addition to the van, seniors and the disabled can also use the MBTA's RIDE paratransit for door-to-door service.

Traffic

Natick is at a crossroads in the regional highway network, with the Massachusetts Turnpike and Route 9 making connections across the Commonwealth, and Routes 16, 27, 30, and 135 providing connections to adjacent communities. More than 100,000 vehicles travel on the Turnpike daily. Recent traffic counts on other roadways in Natick are shown below.

Figure 54. Daily Traffic Volumes

Location	Volume	Year of latest count
Route 9, west of Speen Street	53,600	2005
Route 9, east of Route 27	59,500	2005
Speen Street, south of Route 30	35,300	2003
Speen Street, South of Chrysler Road (just north of Route 9)	38,000	2003
Route 27, north of Route 9	20,500	2003
Route 135, east of Route 27 (Natick Center)	18,700	2003
Route 16, east of Union Street	12,800	2003

Data Source: MassHighway Traffic counts database

Most of the major intersections along Route 9, and the signalized intersections along Route 135 and Speen Street, have been found to be congested in the AM and PM peak periods³⁵.

There are no roadway projects scheduled in Natick in the years 2007-2010 on the Transportation Improvement Program of the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)³⁶

Safety

The heavy traffic volumes traveling through Natick are reflected in annual crash statistics. MassHighway annually has provided a ranking of the top 1000 worst crash locations in the Commonwealth. The most recent ranking used data from 1997-1999 and included the following 7 Natick locations in the top 1000.

³⁵ Congestion Management System 2004 report, CTPS.

³⁶ FY2007-2010 Transportation Improvement Program, Boston Region MPO

Figure 55. Top Crash Sites in Natick, 1997-1999

Rank	Street	Intersecting Street	Total Crashes	Property Damage Crashes	Injury Crashes	Fatal Crashes	Crashes per Year
35	WORCESTER STREET (ROUTE 9)	SPEEN STREET	328	257	71	0	109
40	NORTH MAIN STREET (ROUTE 27)	WORCESTER STREET (ROUTE 9)	313	243	70	0	104
167	WORCESTER STREET (ROUTE 9)	DEAN ROAD	125	87	38	0	42
174	FLUTIE PASS	SPEEN STREET	169	143	26	0	56
178	OAK STREET	WORCESTER STREET (ROUTE 9)	153	124	29	0	51
212	SPEEN STREET	WEST CENTRAL STREET (ROUTE 135)	124	95	28	1	41
767	WEST CENTRAL STREET (ROUTE 135)	MILL STREET	63	50	13	0	21

Data Source: MassHighway

The crash forms and the information gathering process changed beginning with 2002, and statistics before and after this point are not directly comparable. To reflect more recent crash experience in Natick, the total crashes in Natick from 2002 to 2004 are summarized below (2005 crash files are just becoming available). The trend in total crashes and injuries is down over those three years. (Crash data for Natick and its peer communities is available in the Appendix)

Figure 56. Natick Crash Trends, 2002-2004

	Total in Natick	Injury Crashes	Injuries	Fatalities	Unknown
2002	1013	219	295	1	43
2003	989	217	287	1	29
2004	909	175	244	0	28

Data Source: MassHighway

MassHighway has not done the top 1000 rating based on recent data, so MAPC did an evaluation using the newest crash statistics, for years 2002 to 2004. These results show a somewhat different picture of high crash locations when compared to years 1997-1999. Route 9 at Speen Street, Route 9 at Route 27, and Route 9 at Oak Street remain the locations with the highest numbers of crashes, as previously, but all three have seen a reduction in the percentage of crashes involving injuries. Natick Center now appears on the list, where it previously did not, possibly because of the more expansive definition of Natick Center used for this analysis. Numbers of crashes declined at Route 135 and Speen Street, Route 9 and Dean Street, and Route 135 and Mill Street.

Figure 57. Top Crash Sites in Natick, 2004

Street	Intersecting Street	Total Crashes	Injury Crashes	Total Injuries	Most Common Collision Type
ROUTE 9	SPEEN ST ³⁷	122	20	28	54 Rear End, 22 Angle, 21 Sideswipe, Same direction, 11 single vehicle
ROUTE 9	ROUTE 27 ³⁸	92	19	26	70 Rear End, 10 Angle, 7 Sideswipe, Same direction
ROUTE 9	OAK ST ³⁹	49	5	6	24 Rear End, 7 Angle, 11 Sideswipe, Same direction
MAIN STREET	CENTRAL ST (NATICK CENTER) ⁴⁰	42	2	4	23 Rear End, majority Angle on Main Street
ROUTE 135, WEST CENTRAL ST	SPEEN STREET	32	4	8	17, Rear End
ROUTE 9	DEAN ROAD ⁴¹	30	8	11	14 Rear End, 12 Angle
ROUTE 135, WEST CENTRAL ST	MILL ST	15	1	1	8 Rear End, 6 Angle

Data Source: MAPC analysis of MassHighway Data

The low numbers of injuries and high number of rear end crashes at most locations are typically indicative of congestion problems, rather than other unsafe practices like speeding and running red lights. Angle collisions may indicate a red light running problem, and sideswiping and single vehicles may indicate speeding. A more definitive examination of the causes of crashes at these locations would require a more detailed analysis of all the crashes at that location, but such an analysis may be prudent to improve public safety.

Bicyclists and Pedestrians

Natick is active on many fronts to improve conditions for bicycling and walking. Natick's Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (NBPAC), established in 1997, coordinates and advocates for many efforts to make Natick more bicycle and pedestrian friendly. The proposed Cochituate Rail Trail is one of their most important projects. The trail would occupy the inactive Saxonville Branch Line railroad right-of-way, extending 3.7 miles from Saxonville village in Framingham into Natick Center, with possible spur trails to Natick Mall and Cochituate Brook Reservation. Framingham is presently negotiating a lease for their section, which is owned by the MBTA. The Natick section is owned by the CSX railway company, who filed to officially abandon the right-of-way in the summer of 2006. Natick has requested that the right-of-way be preserved for trail use under the federal "railbanking" provision, while the town explores ways to purchase the land.

NBPAC also advises the town on improvements to Natick's roadways for pedestrians and bicyclists, most recently with recommendations on the reconstruction of Rte. 135 and the Rte. 9 bridge over Lake Cochituate. The town has also recently applied for a grant from the Office of Commonwealth Development's TOD Infrastructure and Housing Support Program to improve bicycle parking facilities at the Natick Center commuter rail station. A. Richard Miller, chairman of NBPAC, also has a seat on the Massachusetts Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Board, ensuring that issues important to Natick's non-

³⁷ Including intersections within the bounds of Hartford Street and Mall Road on Speen Street

³⁸ Including intersections within the bounds of Bacon Street, Rutledge Road, Park Avenue and Sunnyside Road

³⁹ Including intersections within the bounds of Maine Street, Connecticut Ave, Orchard Road, and Whittier Road

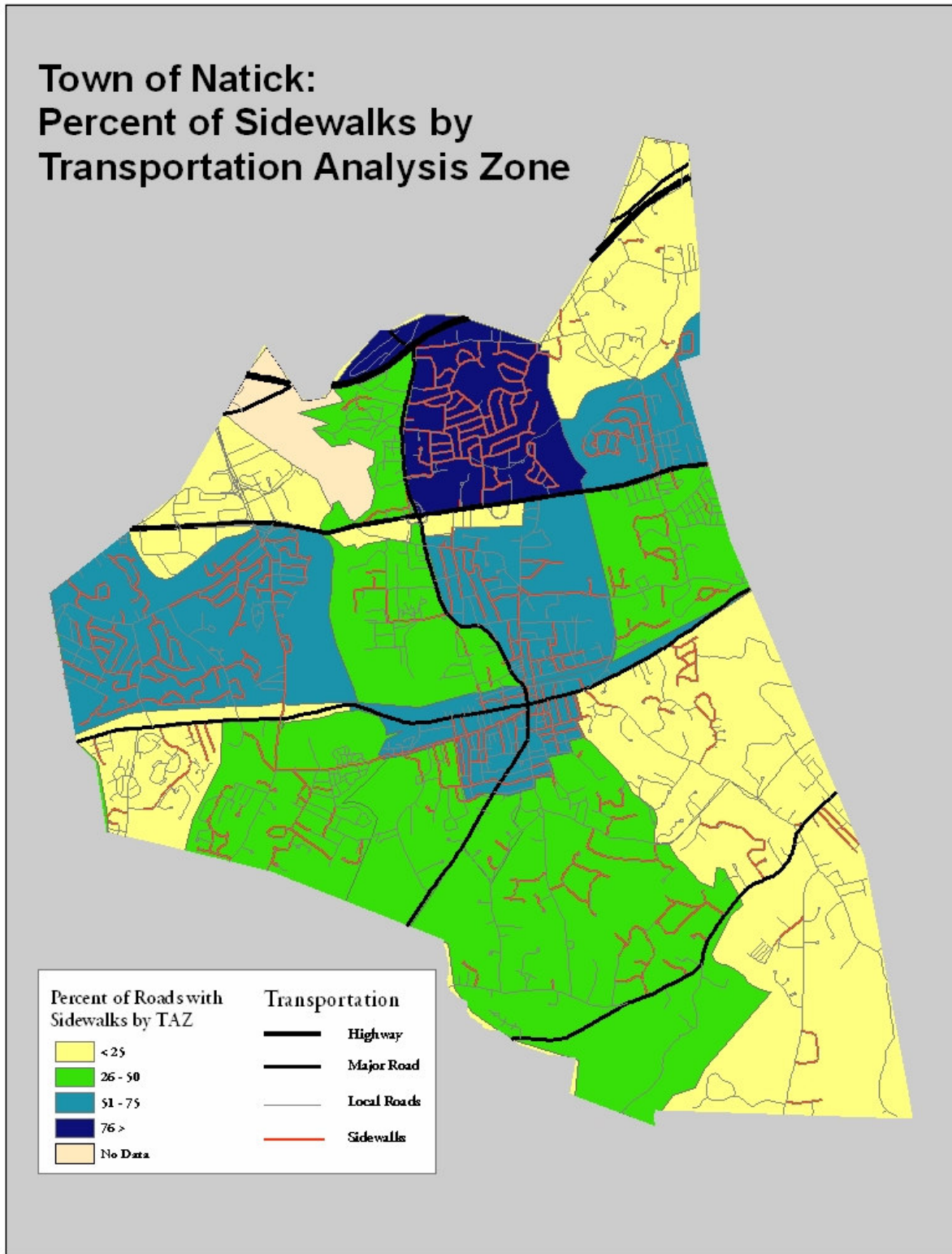
⁴⁰ Including intersections within the bounds of Spring Street, East Street, North Avenue, and Morse Street.

⁴¹ Including the mall entrances/exits

motorized travelers are considered by state agencies and that Natick is informed of the latest developments around the Commonwealth.

We noted earlier that very few residents walked to work. Although no good statistics are available, MAPC estimates on the basis of our general experience throughout the region that few Natick children probably walk to school. Based on sidewalk availability and the location of schools, we estimate that about 20% of all elementary age children may be able to walk to their school. This is close to the regional average of 27%, and higher than most communities located beyond Route 128, but it also reflects the difficulties that most Natick residents face in safely walking, except in the center of town. The map below (Map 8, Percent of Sidewalks by Transportation Analysis Zone), shows sidewalk availability in different areas of Natick. (Sidewalks would need to be available on both sides of a roadway for it to be considered 100% covered.

Map 8. Percent of Sidewalks by Transportation Analysis Zone



Resources and External Funding Opportunities

Plan Implementation Funding

Grant Opportunities for moving ahead with implementation of the Natick Strategic Plan include a number of state grants that are accessed via the State's Commonwealth Capital (CC) program. Under this program, established in FY04, the state is directing funding from a number of grant programs to communities that are taking actions to implement Smart Growth development, as determined and measured by the Office for Commonwealth Development (OCD) (see the state's Sustainable Development Principles at <http://www.mass.gov/Eocd/docs/ppts/sdprinciples.ppt>) .

Each year, OCD develops a Commonwealth Capital application which includes a series of questions designed to measure the efforts of communities to steer growth into smart growth locations or densities. Communities receive a CC Score, which is then used in evaluating their applications for grant programs.

The Town of Natick completed a Commonwealth Capital application for FY05, and scored 71 out of 140, which was close to the median for that year. Natick did not complete an application for FY06, significantly limiting any chance of success for grant applications for any of the Commonwealth Capital grant categories.

Commonwealth Capital Programs

The FY06 CC program is continuing without change into FY07. Therefore, any consideration by Natick to apply for any of the following grants should be preceded by completion of a CC application. Note that the application (see appendix) includes areas for the community to score points for commitments towards Sustainable Development that will be undertaken over the next year. The Town should consider taking actions which are designed to implement the Strategic Plan and which will also improve the town's score on the CC application.

For FY06, the CC applications and program include the following state grant programs⁴² (note: some programs are not listed below as they are not appropriate for Natick):

Public Works Economic Development Program (EOT):

The PWED program promotes economic development through improvement to streets, sidewalks and other specific infrastructure. Eligible activities include design, construction and/or reconstruction of existing and/or newly relocated streets, sidewalks and related infrastructure. <http://www.eot.state.ma.us/default.asp?pgid=content/EOTGrantsPWED&sid=about>

Transit Oriented Development Bond program (EOT):

TOD Bond Program finances housing, parking, bicycle and pedestrian facilities within ¼ mile of transit stations. Funds may be used to build or rehabilitate housing, at least 25% of which must be affordable to persons earning no more than 80% of the area median income. Funds may also be used for the design, construction, reconstruction or enhancement of parking, pedestrian and bicycle facilities near transit. http://www.mbtta.com/projects_underway/tod_resources.asp#infrastructure

Community Development Action Grants (DHCD):

CDAG is designed to stimulate economic development activities that will leverage private investment, create jobs and help blighted neighborhoods. Eligible activities include installation, improvement, construction, alteration and rehabilitation of publicly-owned and managed properties such as building facades, streets, sidewalks, rail spurs and water/sewer lines. <http://www.mass.gov/dhcd/components/cs/1PrgApps/CDAG/default.HTM>

⁴² Descriptions of funding programs from "Capacity Building Resources for Cities and Towns in the Commonwealth", prepared by Office for Commonwealth Development, or from state web pages.

Affordable Housing Trust Fund (DHCD):

Funds from the AHTF may be used to support the acquisition, development or preservation of affordable housing units. Funds may be used flexibly to ensure financial feasibility of projects. A wide range of financial assistance is available.

<http://www.mass.gov/dhcd/Temp/AHTG.pdf>

Housing Stabilization Fund (DHCD):

The HSF supports the acquisition, rehabilitation and re-use of distressed, foreclosed or abandoned properties for affordable housing. A portion of the HSF funds are also used to provide a SoftSecond Loan program. http://www.mass.gov/dhcd/publications/fact_sheets/hsf.pdf

Housing Development Support Program (DHCD):

A component of the Community Development block Grant Program designed to assist on project-specific affordable housing initiatives with emphasis on creation, preservation or improvement of small scale public and private projects.

http://www.mass.gov/dhcd/publications/fact_sheets/hdsp.pdf

Commercial Area Transit Node Program (DHCD):

Provides financial support for developing residential housing units within neighborhood commercial areas and to fund transit-oriented housing developments in proximity to transit nodes. Not less than 51% of units assisted by the program must meet DHCD affordability guidelines.

<http://www.mass.gov/dhcd/components/housdev/want/CATNHPgd-lines.pdf>

State Revolving Fund (EOEA – DEP):

Low interest loans for planning, engineering, design and construction of projects that protect public health and strengthen compliance with federal and state drinking water regulations. Eligible projects include combined sewer overflow (CSO) mitigation, new wastewater treatment facilities and upgrades of existing facilities, infiltration / inflow correction, wastewater collection systems, and nonpoint source pollution abatement projects, such as landfill capping, community programs for upgrading septic systems (Title 5), brownfield remediation, pollution prevention, and stormwater remediation. In addition, non-structural projects are eligible for SRF funding; e.g., planning projects for nonpoint source problems which are consistent with the MassDEP's Nonpoint Source Management Plan and that identify pollution sources and suggest potential remediation strategies. <http://mass.gov/dep/water/mfcatg.htm> and

<http://www.mass.gov/dep/water/wastewater/srfhowto.htm>

Drinking Water Supply Protection Grant Program (EOEA – DEP): Reimbursement funding for the purpose of acquiring land to protect public drinking water supplies. To be eligible for this program, the proposed land acquisitions must be currently unprotected and located in an existing or future groundwater or surface water supply area.

<http://www.mass.gov/dep/water/dwgrant.htm>

Self-Help Program (EOEA- DCS):

The Self-Help program assists municipal conservation commissions acquiring land for natural resource and passive outdoor recreation purposes. Lands acquired may include wildlife, habitat, trails, unique natural, historic or cultural resources, water resources, forest, and farm land.

Compatible passive outdoor recreational uses such as hiking, fishing, hunting, cross-country skiing, bird observation and the like are encouraged. Access by the general public is required.

<http://www.mass.gov/envir/dcs/selfhelp/default.htm>

Urban Self Help Program (EOEA - DCS):

The Urban Self-Help Program was established to assist cities and towns in acquiring and developing land for park and outdoor recreation purposes. Any town with a population of 35,000 or more year-round residents, or any city regardless of size, that has an authorized park /recreation commission and conservation commission, is eligible to participate in the program. Communities that do not meet the population criteria listed above may still qualify under the

"small town," "regional," or "statewide" project provisions of the program.
<http://www.mass.gov/envir/dcs/urban/default.htm>

Land & Water Conservation Fund (EOEA-DCS):

The Federal Land & Water Conservation Fund (P.L.88-578) provides up to 50% of the total project cost for the acquisition, development and renovation of park, recreation or conservation areas. Municipalities, special districts and state agencies are eligible to apply. Nearly 4000 acres have been acquired and hundreds of parks renovated using the \$90.5 million that Massachusetts has received from the state side portion of the federal program since 1965. DCS administers the state side Land & Water Conservation Fund program in Massachusetts. Access by the general public is required. <http://www.mass.gov/envir/dcs/landwater/default.htm>

Agricultural Preservation Restriction Program (EOEA - DAR):

The APR Program is a voluntary program which is intended to offer a non-development alternative to farmers and other owners of "prime" and "state important" agricultural land who are faced with a decision regarding future use and disposition of their farms. Towards this end, the program offers to pay farmers the difference between the "fair market value" and the "agricultural value" of their farmland in exchange for a permanent deed restriction which precludes any use of the property that will have a negative impact on its agricultural viability.
<http://www.mass.gov/agr/landuse/APR/index.htm>

Drinking Water Supply Protection Program (EOEA DEP):

Up to 50% grants for acquisitions for the purpose of acquiring land to protect public drinking water supplies. <http://mass.gov/dep/water/dwgrant.htm>

UrbanRiver Visions Implementation Program (EOEA):

Grants to eligible communities to implement recommendations from their Urban River Visions Plans. These plans were developed under previous UrbanRiver grants to municipalities that have previously developed but underutilized riverfront sites appropriate for a planning charrette. Each charrette developed a shared community vision and action plan for revitalization of the selected site. <http://commpres.env.state.ma.us/content/urv.asp>

Coastal Pollution Remediation (CPR) Grant Program (EOEA - CZM):

The primary goal of CPR is to improve coastal water quality by reducing or eliminating NPS pollution, specifically from transportation-related sources. Within this goal are four main objectives, characterize and treat urban runoff from municipal roadways, improve coastal resources such as shellfish beds and fish habitat, demonstrate traditional and innovative best management practices, and educate the public about stormwater runoff problems. Natick is eligible due to its location in the Greater Massachusetts Coastal Watershed.
<http://www.mass.gov/czm/cprgp.htm>

Coastal Nonpoint Source (NPS) Pollution Grant Program (EOEA – CZM):

The Coastal Nonpoint Source Pollution (Coastal NPS) grant program assists public and non-profit entities in implementing nonpoint source pollution control efforts. Coastal NPS grant funding can be used for watershed- or subwatershed-scale NPS assessments, development of local planning tools, public education and outreach, design and/or implementation of Smart Growth and Low-Impact Development strategies for NPS control, and efforts to eliminate or manage pollution from septic systems and publicly owned marinas. Natick is eligible due to its location in the Greater Massachusetts Coastal Watershed. <http://www.mass.gov/czm/coastalnpsgrants.htm>

Smart Growth Technical Assistance Program (EOEA):

The Smart Growth Technical Assistance Grant Program provides funding to implement smart growth zoning changes and undertake other activities that will improve local and regional sustainable development practices. Unlike the other 19, a primary goal of this program is to help

communities with low Commonwealth Capital scores improve.
http://commpres.env.state.ma.us/content/sgta_grants.asp

Additional Sources of Funding

Priority Development Fund (DHCD):

The goal of the PDF Planning Assistance funds is to increase the supply of housing in the Commonwealth by encouraging community-based planning that will lead directly to housing production (in particular mixed-income rental housing and modestly sized, modestly priced “starter homes”). Priority is given to applications that address or encourage new housing production within city or town centers, on brownfields or underutilized commercial or institutional land, or as part of a transit-oriented development opportunity. Priority is also given to the adaptive re-use of existing structures not currently used for housing purposes. <http://www.mass.gov/dhcd/Temp/06/PDFapp/pdf.HTM>

Community Development Block Grant - Community Development Fund II (DHCD):

The Community Development Fund (CDF) is a Community Development Block Grant program that supports revitalization efforts of cities and towns in order to address the needs of low- and moderate-income residents by supporting housing, community, and economic development activities in cities and towns throughout the Commonwealth. There are two programs within CDF program: CDF I and CDF II. Natick is eligible for CDF II as it received a Community-Wide Needs (CWN) Score of 20 in FY06 (to be eligible for CDF II, CWN score must be 24 or less).

<http://www.mass.gov/dhcd/components/cs/1PrgApps/CDFI-II/default.HTM>

Chapter 40R: Smart Growth Incentive Zoning (DHCD):

Chapter 40R of M.G.L. encourages communities to create smart growth zoning districts in locations such as near transit stations or existing city and town centers, to enable dense high density development with a high percentage of affordable housing units. Upon state review and approval of a local smart growth overlay district, communities become eligible for payments from a Smart Growth Housing Trust Fund, as well as other financial incentives. The smart growth zoning district enables desired forms of development either as-of-right or through a limited plan review process akin to site plan review.

<http://www.mass.gov/dhcd/40R/default.htm>.

Community Preservation Act:

An additional source of funds is the Community Preservation Act. Under this act, local municipalities may vote to establish accounts to be funded by a property tax surcharges (up to 3% surcharge), which will also be matched up to 100% by a state fund. The CPA funds may be used for open space protection, historic preservation activities, affordable housing and public recreation under a plan to be developed by the municipality. Details related to the CPA can be found at www.communitypreservation.org. Natick failed to approve a proposal to establish a CPA fund supported by a 2% property tax surcharge in spring 2006.

Massachusetts Downtown Initiative (DHCD):

MDI provides technical assistance to communities that are making downtown revitalization an integral part of community development. Assistance is provided in three forms: ‘Desktop Technical Assistance’ (requests for information via telephone, mail or email); ‘Site Visit Program’ (targeting a specific issue related to the community’s downtown revitalization effort – the type of assistance needed is determined through an initial site visit by DHCD staff); ‘Education and Training’ (workshops to assist communities at various stages of downtown development – topics include: economic development, design issues, creating a business improvement district, and organizational issues).

<http://www.mass.gov/dhcd/components/cs/1PrgApps/MDI/default.HTM>

Climate Protection Grant (DEP):

The Climate Protection Grant Program offers financial and technical assistance to communities that have established local climate protection goals or programs. Grants are for support of activities identified in a

community's Local Action Plan or other climate protection planning document. The program aims to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, improve energy efficiency, and affect climate change at the local level. Eligible projects include installation of pedestrian and bicycle amenities, transportation related initiatives, public education campaigns, and guidelines for municipal purchasing of renewable energy. <http://www.mass.gov/dep/recycle/mwrgin07.doc>

Transportation Improvement Program (MPO):

The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is managed by the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). The TIP lists all transportation projects programmed to receive federal funds over a four-year horizon and all projects programmed with federal and state highway funds that are expected to be available. Eligible project categories are: bridges, roads, bicycle facilities, and pedestrian and streetscape improvements. The MPO has defined the overall framework for TIP programming and created project selection criteria. Criteria are used on existing conditions, safety, mobility, cost effectiveness, economic development, land use, and community impact. A detailed description of the TIP and individual projects funded for the 2005-2009 fiscal years is available.

<http://www.bostonmpo.org/bostonmpo/resources/tip/tipeval.htm> and

<http://www.mrpc.org/Downloads/TIP%20Process%20Outline.pdf>

Peer-to-Peer Technical Assistance Program (DHCD):

The Peer-To-Peer Technical Assistance Program provides small grants to CDBG non-entitlement communities for short-term problem solving or technical assistance projects. Municipalities may apply for grants of up to \$1,000 to employ appointed or elected municipal officials from other communities to provide technical assistance related to community development and/or capacity building at the local level.

<http://www.mass.gov/dhcd/components/cs/1PrgApps/Peer/default.HTM>

Greenways and Trails Demonstration grants (EOEA - DCR):

Greenways are corridors of land and water that protect and link a wide variety of natural, cultural, and recreational resources. DCR provides grants to non-profit organizations, municipalities, and regional planning associations to support innovative greenway and trail projects throughout Massachusetts. DCR will consider requests for an increased funding amount for multi-town greenway and trail projects to promote linkages across town boundaries and foster partnerships among neighboring communities.

Note: the Greenways and Trails Demonstration Grants Program has not been funded in 2006.

<http://www.mass.gov/dcr/stewardship/greenway/grants.htm>

Water Loss Prevention Grant Program (EOEA DEP):

The Water Loss Prevention Grant Program provides funds to public water systems to address drinking water supply and distribution systems water losses. Project tasks/costs eligible for funding may include Water Audits, Leak Detection Survey Program and Reports, Public Water Conservation Outreach Programs or other projects deemed eligible by MassDEP. <http://mass.gov/dep/water/wlpgprog.htm>

Urban Forest Planning and Education (DCR):

These are 50-50 matching grants offered to municipalities and non-profit groups in Massachusetts communities of all sizes for the purpose of building local capacity for excellent urban and community forestry at the local and regional level. This grant offering is not a new grant, but a combination of previous grant programs (Mass ReLeaf, Planning and Education, and Heritage Grants). For the purpose of these grants, Urban and Community Forestry refers to professional management (planting, protection and maintenances) of a municipality's public tree resources in partnership with residents and community institutions. <http://mass.gov/dcr/stewardship/forestry/urban/urbanGrants.htm>

Heritage Tree Care Grant Program (DCR):

This federally funded program offers competitive grants to communities with advanced tree care programs wishing to protect and enhance large or unique "heritage trees" located on public property or easements. In order to be designated a "heritage tree," the tree must have a diameter greater than 32 inches, be designated a champion in size for its species in Massachusetts, or have documented historic significance to the community or state. <http://www.mass.gov/dcr/stewardship/forestry/urban/index.htm>

Mass ReLeaf Grant Program (DCR):

Mass ReLeaf is a trust fund for public tree planting projects in Massachusetts. By seeking public or private funding Mass ReLeaf is able to provide matching grants to support local projects that involve a partnership in the planting and care of trees on public land. The goals of the program are to help communities purchase trees to be planted for energy conservation, screening, community gateway or parking lot enhancement, or to offset urban pollution; and to assure long-term tree survival by emphasizing proper tree selection, planting, aftercare and maintenance.

<http://www.mass.gov/dcr/stewardship/forestry/urban/index.htm>

Recreational Trails Program (DCR):

The Recreational Trails Program provides funding support for a variety of trail protection, construction and stewardship projects throughout Massachusetts. This national program makes funds available to states to develop and maintain recreational trails and trail-related facilities for non-motorized and motorized recreational trail uses. The Program is authorized and funded through the federal "Transportation Equity Act for the 21 st Century" known as TEA-21. It is administered on a reimbursement basis by the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (formerly DEM), in partnership with the Massachusetts Recreational Trails Advisory Board and the Massachusetts Highway Department. Eligible applicants include non-profit organizations, government agencies, and municipalities.

<http://www.mass.gov/dcr/stewardship/greenway/regionalGrants.htm>

Comments from Preliminary Focus Group Research

Overview:

Three preliminary focus groups were conducted on July 25-26, 2006. They were facilitated by Rosemary Driscoll a member of the Strategic Planning Oversight Committee and a professional focus group moderator. A total 21 individuals participated in these sessions.

These preliminary focus groups were conducted as a “pilot test” for future community and key informant workshops and sessions. The observations from these sessions are qualitative in nature and represented responses by community leaders to a series of open-ended questions.

Summary of Themes and Observations:

There was considerable overlap in how the groups viewed the strengths and weaknesses of the Town of Natick. The groups addressed four basic questions, which drove the format of the sessions:

1. What are the challenges facing Natick Today?
2. What are Natick strengths?
3. What are opportunities for Natick to improve?
4. What is the vision for Natick in 2026?

Natick Challenges:

1. How does Natick retain (and/or increase) the economic diversity of the population?
2. How does Natick deal with reduced financial resources as it struggles to provide adequate services to a growing population?
3. How does Natick improve the traffic situation and local transportation, and provide safe access to neighborhoods, downtown, and adjoining towns?
4. How does Natick create a central identity for the town as a whole? How does it encourage the various entrenched groups to come together?

Natick Strengths:

1. All groups remarked on the economic diversity and scale of Natick. It still feels like a small town.
2. There are tremendous local physical resources (bodies of water, parks, working farms, Broadmoor, our geographic location).
3. Downtown is dynamic and becoming a destination.
4. Natick has an increasing cultural community (TCAN, dance studios, craft studios, library)
5. Natick is a safe community—excellent fire and police departments.
6. Natick is still relatively affordable.
7. There is a strong Recreation Department and good programs.
8. Natick has a long history, represented by historic buildings and landscape features throughout the town.
9. The elementary schools are the strength of school system.
10. Natick is lucky to have an endowed library and hospital
11. Civic activities, such as Natick Days and the 4th of July Parade.
12. The “pay as you throw” program.

Natick's Opportunities for Improvement

1. Improve the way we plan and manage growth.
2. Improve the communication across the town and to the community. There is a significant lack of knowledge about resources, services, and procedures. There is a particular opportunity to inform new residents as they move into town.
3. Increase public participation (the same few hundred people participate in everything).

4. Encourage town boards, committees and leadership to have a broader perspective and plan for the town as a whole. There is a perception that Natick suffers from “narrow vision” and does not do things “right the first time”.
5. Make a commitment to follow through on town efforts. Whatever happened to the Downtown Charrette process?
6. Make public buildings more open and accessible to the public.
7. Lack of sidewalks and crosswalks throughout town isolate neighborhoods and create unsafe situations.
8. There is an opportunity to improve the middle school educational experience and the physical plant of the high school.
9. There is no town-wide approach to Youth Services, no Youth Services coordinator.

Vision of Natick in 2026

1. Many participants painted a similar picture of Downtown Natick in 2026: vibrant, dynamic, lots of retail and restaurants, parking.
2. Some participants focused on a downtown with “walking streets” and sidewalks on all streets so that people could easily walk or bike to school, and between neighborhoods and into downtown.
3. There would still be plenty of green – and no overhead utilities.
4. There would be a new high school and a community center with a pool.
5. The municipal buildings would all be in good repair, with solar panels and increased energy efficiency.
6. Natick will still feel like a small town, having maintained its scale and diversity.
7. People will be able to go into Town Hall and be treated with great respect and by very knowledgeable employees.
8. People will be able to swim in the Charles River and the boathouse will have re-opened in South Natick.
9. Stricter, and more thoughtful, zoning regulations will have been developed and implemented.
10. There will be a good mix of affordable and accessible housing.
11. There will be healthcare accessible to all.

Comments from the Natick 360 Business Forum

The Business Forum was conducted on September 8, 2006 at the Crowne Plaza in Natick. Thirteen business leaders representing both downtown Natick and Route 9 businesses participated in that session.

Attendees:

Artie Fair, Fair & Yeager
Peter Burke, B&B Land Corp
Steve Brayman, Fitness Distributors
Jamie Holmes, Crowne Plaza
David Shamoian, Peabody Hotel Group (Crowne Plaza)
Jim Blacquier, Boston Scientific
Craig Johnston, R.W. Holmes Realty Co.
Ed Moore, Metrowest Medical Center
Jim Rider, Mathworks
Len Dube, Natick Labs
Kathryn Yurkanin, Natick Labs
Hope Aldrich, Eastern Insurance Group
Bryant Hill, O.B. Trucking

Summary of Themes and Observations:

There was considerable overlap in how the business forum members and other focus groups viewed the strengths and weaknesses of the Town of Natick. As might be expected, the business forum expressed more concerns related to attracting the right mix of employees, with different skill levels, particularly entry level employees who cannot afford to live in the area. In addition, the business participants voiced strong concerns about traffic, insufficient parking, and insufficient regional transportation—all problems raised as well by the non-profit and volunteers. All groups had a remarkably similar vision of Natick in 2026.

Challenges Facing Natick

- Traffic volume and congestion on roads
- Lack of downtown parking
- Limited Public Transportation
- How does Natick maintain its diversity?
- Cost of housing and rental properties keeps many out
- Proposition 2 ½ limits and constrains our ability to fund needed improvements and services
- Hard to attract the right employees (different skill levels; entry level can't afford to live here)
- Lack of affordable land and re-development opportunities
- Lack of entry level jobs with a career path
- The number of housing units in the pipeline right now is going to be a huge challenge to the town's infrastructure (schools, services, sewer)
- We need more open space and recreational areas
- We need to maintain open space and recreational areas
- The Town frequently hesitates to take responsibility for making something happen: Rails to Trails; lack of bike lanes
- Insufficient professional office space (medical office space particularly in proximity to hospital)
- How do we educate the wider community about the real costs of services?
- How do we shift the perspective of the community and government that business plays a very positive role in the town and should be supported?
- How do we keep seniors engaged? Can we get a senior center?
- How can we make Natick, particularly the Route 9 area pedestrian friendly
- How can we regionalize services in order to gain efficiencies? At a minimum, do towns in the region share best practices?

Natick Strengths

- Our location—centrally located near major connecting roads (easy access to Mass Pike).
- Concentration of retail and other amenities
- “Home of Champions” lot of support and involvement
- Balance of city and country living
- Economic diversity
- Attractive Downtown: historical and community center
- Good civic participation
- Low crime/safe community
- Town management is accessible (town hall; police; fire)
- Has a full-service community hospital
- Large number of national/global corporate headquarters located in area (Cognex, Bose, Boston Scientific, Math Works, TJX, Staples, etc.)
- Relatively low tax rate because it is single not split like Framingham
- Located in a region with so many distinct communities: Natick, Wellesley, Framingham, Sherborn, etc.
- Many natural and recreational resources: Lake Cochituate (relatively unknown and under-utilized); Broadmoor, Town Forest, Sassamon Trace.
- New potential for regional bus system
- Active military base
- TCAN
- Having commuter rail stops in town
- Neighborhood bus is a positive
- Quality of schools

Natick Opportunities for Change/Improvement

- Increase community involvement with the town—more widespread community involvement
- There should be more community education so everyone knows what is going on, how decisions are made, how money is spent.
- Improve Natick’s website to attract more people to volunteer, participate in civic activities, government, etc.
- Improve the permitting process which is very slow and difficult
- Public meetings really slow things down. There should be a goal of pushing more work off the committees and boards and to the administrator’s office to facilitate efforts.
- There should be a Town Ambassador assigned to new businesses or businesses just beginning to work with the town.
- There should be better communication on infrastructure changes—more advance warnings of road and utility work; provide accurate timetables; develop a mechanism for business to have input to some of these changes.
- Signage requirements should be re-visited. In some cases, they are too strict and in others too lenient/un-enforced, leaving businesses confused.
- Actively build a real partnership between town government and services and the business community
- Consider town help for transitional costs for military assigned to area (deposits, affordable housing, etc.). The military will always be able to track down “non-payments” so hefty deposits are unnecessary
- Have on-going forums like this

Vision for Natick 2026

- Natick will still retain that small town feeling
- We will still be attracting young families to live here
- A good balance of residential, retail and commercial development

- A good balance of cultural and demographic groups
- It will be clean, still, green, well-designed, architecturally attractive
- Route 9 will be more pedestrian oriented—more connectedness of Route 9 area.
- Downtown will also be more pedestrian oriented
- There will be a vital night life downtown, plenty of parking, retail open late enough for after-work access
- Commuter rail will provide transportation to and from stations
- There will be a community center, with a pool
- The school system will be strong with a new high school

Appendix

Peer Group Historic Populations

Town	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	% Change 1990- 2000
ARLINGTON	44,353	49,953	53,524	48,219	44,630	42,389	-5.02%
BRAINTREE	23,161	31,069	35,050	36,337	33,836	33,828	-0.02%
BURLINGTON	3,250	12,852	21,980	23,486	23,302	22,876	-1.83%
CANTON	7,465	12,771	17,100	18,182	18,530	20,775	12.12%
DEDHAM	18,487	23,869	26,938	25,298	23,782	23,464	-1.34%
FRANKLIN	8,037	10,530	17,830	18,217	22,095	29,560	33.79%
LEXINGTON	17,735	27,691	31,886	29,479	28,974	30,355	4.77%
MILTON	22,395	26,375	27,190	25,860	25,725	26,062	1.31%
NEEDHAM	16,313	25,793	29,748	27,901	27,557	28,911	4.91%
NEWTON	81,994	92,384	91,263	83,622	82,585	83,829	1.51%
NORWOOD	1,636	24,898	30,815	29,711	28,700	28,587	-0.39%
READING	14,006	19,259	22,539	22,678	22,539	23,708	5.19%
WAKEFIELD	19,633	24,295	25,402	24,895	24,825	24,804	-0.08%
WALPOLE	9,109	14,068	18,149	18,859	20,212	22,824	12.92%
WELLESLEY	20,549	26,071	28,051	27,209	26,615	26,613	-0.01%
Median	17,735	24,898	27,190	25,860	25,725	26,613	1.3%

Data Source: US Census

Comparison of Total Population and Total Foreign Born Population in the Town of Natick, 1970-2000

	Total Population				Total Foreign Born					
GEO2000	TRCTPOP7	TRCTPOP8	TRCTPOP9	TRCTPOP0	FORBORN7	FORBORN8	FORBORN9	FORBORN0	2000 % Foreign Born	2000 % increase in foreign Born
25017382100	6411	5054	4570	4654	459	369	279	408	8.77%	0.462366
25017382200	5712	5541	4949	5012	406	440	344	452	9.02%	0.313953
25017382300	4665	4633	5071	5475	399	433	324	314	5.74%	-0.03086
25017382400	4980	4423	4098	4546	364	377	283	248	5.46%	-0.12367
25017382500	5136	4175	3996	4206	397	202	222	429	10.20%	0.932432
25017382600	4143	5643	7821	8277	163	425	592	1317	15.91%	1.224662

Data Source: Geolytics Database

Number of Jobs in Natick by Sector, 1985-2001*

Year	Number of Establishments	Total Jobs	Services	Trade	Manufacturing	Government	Finance & Real Estate	Construction	Transportation, Communications, & Utilities	Agriculture, Fisheries & Forestry
1985	900	17,809	4,104	7,387	2,584	2,433	456	443	268	134
1986	993	18,429	4,493	6,924	2,679	2,416	792	549	403	173
1987	1,042	19,763	4,579	8,202	2,510	2,377	835	686	391	184
1988	1,113	19,891	4,831	7,813	2,301	2,410	943	918	444	232
1989	1,170	19,796	5,050	7,745	1,984	2,342	1,014	712	724	225
1990	1,197	19,331	4,427	7,663	1,782	2,316	1,025	1,290	625	203
1991	1,158	16,951	4,257	6,798	1,640	2,224	842	408	591	191
1992	1,138	17,403	4,561	6,929	1,770	2,179	689	391	698	186
1993	1,183	17,730	4,978	6,396	1,816	2,268	652	467	974	179
1994	1,305	18,441	5,555	6,627	1,747	2,094	714	476	1,035	193
1995	1,356	20,626	6,175	8,198	1,687	2,004	687	455	1,200	220
1996	1,368	20,537	6,557	8,298	1,792	1,939	731	441	553	226
1997	1,326	21,585	6,922	8,244	2,435	2,059	738	421	477	289
1998	1,385	23,033	7,690	8,561	2,519	2,088	806	422	584	363
1999	1,409	23,635	7,975	8,900	2,406	2,008	905	491	670	280
2000	1,445	24,156	8,972	8,928	2,032	2,037	887	533	574	193
2001	1,445	23,878	8,887	8,833	2,011	2,083	877	491	503	193
% of 2000 Jobs			37%	37%	8%	9%	4%	2%	2%	1%
Job Growth 1990 - 2000										
#	248	4,547	4,460	1,170	229	-233	-148	-799	-122	-10
%	21%	24%	101%	15%	13%	-10%	-14%	-62%	-20%	-5%

* The Bureau of Labor Statistics changed their sector classification system in 2001. As a result, historical comparison to present of jobs by sector is not possible.

Data Source: MA Department of Workforce Development

Arts and Culture: List of Arts and Culture Organizations in Natick

Organization	Exemption Type
FRIENDS OF THE JULY FOURTH PARADE, INCORPORATED	FAIR
HIS MAJESTY'S 5TH REGIMENT OF FOOT, NORTHUMBERLAND, INCORPORATED	HISTORICAL
NATIONAL SOCIETY OF THE DAUGHTERS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION	HISTORICAL
BACON FREE LIBRARY	LIBRARY
FRIENDS OF MORSE INSTITUTE LIBRARY	LIBRARY
MINUTEMAN LIBRARY NETWORK, INCORPORATED	LIBRARY
MORSE INSTITUTE LIBRARY	LIBRARY
NORTH AMERICAN FRIENDS OF CHAWTON HOUSE LIBRARY, INCORPORATED	LIBRARY
NATICK PEGASUS COMMUNITY ACCESS TELEVISION	MEDIA
WELLESLEY CHANNEL	MEDIA
CENTER FOR THE ARTS IN NATICK	MULTIDISCIPLINARY
HISTORICAL NATURAL HISTORY AND LIBRARY SOCIETY	MULTIDISCIPLINARY
METROWEST ARTS COLLABORATIVE	MULTIDISCIPLINARY
NATICK CULTURAL ARTS COMMITTEE	MULTIDISCIPLINARY
MASSACHUSETTS AUDUBON SOCIETY - BROADMOOR WILDLIFE SANCTUARY	MUSEUM
AMERICAN VOCALARTS QUINTET	PERFORMING
BOSTON CHAMBER SOLOISTS	PERFORMING
CONCERT DANCE COMPANY OF BOSTON	PERFORMING
FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH - APPALACHIAN BENEFIT COFFEEHOUSE	PERFORMING
FRENCH SYMPHONY OF BOSTON	PERFORMING
FRIENDS OF NATICK DRAMA WORKSHOP, INCORPORATED	PERFORMING
LAWRENCE CHORAL ARTS SOCIETY	PERFORMING
LITHUANIAN FOLK DANCE GROUP, INCORPORATED	PERFORMING
NATICK ON ENSEMBLE THEATER, INCORPORATED	PERFORMING
SQUARE RIGGERS SQUARE DANCE CLUB, INCORPORATED	PERFORMING
WINTERSAUCE FOUNDATION, INCORPORATED	PERFORMING
NATICK CULTURAL COUNCIL	SERVICE
NATIONAL ARTS AND LEARNING FOUNDATION	SERVICE
SAVE MUSICAMERICA TRUST	SERVICE
GRAPHIC ARTS INSTITUTE OF NEW ENGLAND, INCORPORATED	VISUAL
PRINTING INSTITUTE OF NEW ENGLAND, INCORPORATED	VISUAL

Data Source: New England Cultural Database, 2003

Town Services: Directory of Natick Town Services and Contact Information

Service	Department	Phone (508)
Assessments	Assessors	647-6420
Birth Certificates	Town Clerk	647-6430
Building Permits	Building Inspector	647-6447
Burial Permits	Health Department	647-6460
Civil Defense	Deputy MacAlpine/Sgt. Horning	653-2323
Community Farm Natick	Community Farm	655-2204
Council On Aging	Senior Citizen Center	647-6540
Death Certificates	Town Clerk	647-6430
Dog Licenses	Town Clerk	647-6430
Elections	Board of Registrars	647-6459
Electrical Permits	Building Department	647-6449
Fire (non-emergency)	Fire Department	647-9550
Fishing & Hunting License	Town Clerk	647-6430
Health	Health Department	647-6460
Housing Authority	4 Cottage Street	653-2971
Library	Morse Institute	647-6520
Licenses	Board of Selectmen	647-6410
Lights, Street	Board of Selectmen	647-6410
Marriage Certificates	Town Clerk	647-6430
Plumbing Permits	Building Department	647-6450
Police (non-emergency)	Police Department	647-9500
Public Transportation	Natick Neighborhood Bus	647-6446
Recreation Programs	Parks & Recreation Dept	647-6530
SCHOOLS	NATICK PUBLIC SCHOOLS	647-6500
Selectmen	Board of Selectmen	647-6410
Sewers	Public Works Department	647-6550
Street Maintenance	Public Works Department	647-6550
Tax Collections	Tax Collector	647-6425
Town By-Laws	Town Clerk	647-6430
Trash Collection	Public Works Department	647-6550
Voting, Registration	Board of Registrars	647-6459

Data Source: http://natickma.virtualltownhall.net/Public_Documents/NatickMA_WebDocs/services

**NUMBER OF CRASHES ENTERED INTO REGISTRY OF MOTOR VEHICLES
ACCIDENT RECORDS SYSTEM (1990-2001)
AND CRASH DATA SYSTEM (2002-2004)
BY NATICK PEER TOWNS AND YEAR**

City/Town	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	Crashes 1990- 2004	% Change 2001-2002
ARLINGTON	864	700	717	679	713	736	778	701	687	659	673	595	301	307	195	9,305	-49.4%
BRAINTREE	1,517	1,238	1,343	1,382	1,384	1,357	1,457	1,373	1,486	1,419	1,460	1,418	926	923	902	19,585	-34.7%
BURLINGTON	1,402	1,176	1,170	1,229	1,114	1,205	1,217	1,243	1,252	1,171	1,234	1,104	789	770	716	16,792	-28.5%
CANTON	877	758	734	782	759	865	943	896	868	827	933	792	379	415	535	11,363	-52.1%
CHELMSFORD	976	961	958	1,046	989	1,072	1,061	1,043	1,090	1,117	1,239	1,127	968	921	731	15,299	-14.1%
DEDHAM	1,049	864	904	876	934	934	939	839	851	797	840	793	288	316	612	11,836	-63.7%
FRANKLIN	558	509	542	548	519	522	651	566	554	513	646	627	405	461	454	8,075	-35.4%
LEXINGTON	929	838	844	949	962	987	974	956	981	999	1,031	984	794	767	688	13,683	-19.3%
MILTON	751	707	751	704	744	859	933	911	848	875	921	870	707	738	634	11,953	-18.7%
NEEDHAM	730	682	711	749	803	739	878	808	810	763	780	826	510	578	572	10,939	-38.3%
NEWTON	2,509	2,259	2,409	2,608	2,510	2,559	2,949	2,740	2,622	2,479	2,730	2,425	1,859	1,926	1,754	36,338	-23.3%
NORTH ANDOVER	688	645	612	607	679	662	708	703	697	621	769	728	569	649	528	9,865	-21.8%
NORTHBOROUGH	371	355	331	367	361	386	467	391	370	371	434	349	349	321	308	5,531	0.0%
NORWOOD	829	746	741	857	865	804	853	822	822	813	847	794	595	603	623	11,614	-25.1%
READING	719	592	606	634	640	570	616	563	582	512	639	596	531	506	466	8,772	-10.9%
SHREWSBURY	847	795	828	882	950	911	1,024	917	806	617	613	593	250	433	856	11,322	-57.8%
WAKEFIELD	612	580	550	668	636	673	695	637	570	619	693	728	480	503	474	9,118	-34.1%
WALPOLE	608	487	535	594	547	534	621	586	595	569	633	633	133	358	514	7,947	-79.0%
WELLESLEY	1,123	910	904	1,004	1,108	1,077	1,195	1,182	1,121	1,124	1,305	1,243	993	916	947	16,152	-20.1%
WESTBOROUGH	611	546	611	633	685	682	752	654	731	703	811	832	636	622	565	10,074	-23.6%
TOTAL	18,570	16,348	16,801	17,798	17,902	18,134	19,711	18,531	18,343	17,568	19,231	18,057	12,462	13,033	13,074	255,563	-31.0%

NATICK	1,057	906	975	963	1,099	1,089	1,306	1,365	1,310	1,251	1,410	1,355	1,013	989	909	16,997	-25.2%
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Data Source: MassHighway

APPENDIX – DEMOGRAPHIC PROJECTION METHODOLOGY

Source document: Baseline:Population and Employment Projections 2010-2030 Metropolitan Area Planning Council January, 2006

Overview

The Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) has completed population and employment projections for 164 communities in the Boston area. These projections are used in a wide variety of ways, ranging from estimating likely traffic and water impacts over time, to helping communities determine where and how to grow.

As part of the MetroFuture initiative, MAPC is using the projections of its 101 communities to develop a picture of likely growth patterns in the region, if historical trends are extended. This data will be used to develop alternative strategies for the region's growth and development through the year 2030.⁴³ The projections will also inform the FY2006 update of the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization's 25 year Transportation Plan, where future transportation improvements are identified.

The Boston area regional transportation plan requires projections of population and employment totals to the year 2030. The regional transportation model includes 164 communities in Eastern Massachusetts. Within each community, these projections need to be further broken down into Traffic Analysis Zones (TAZs), which are based on US Census block or block group geography.

We have used standard methodologies to make these projections. For this base scenario of the region's likely future, we have assumed that the future will be mostly like the recent past. Population growth is based on the state birth and death rates, by age-sex-race cohorts for the region, and on a community's overall recent growth trends. Net population migration for the region is also based on the trend of 1990s. The employment trends are based on national growth projections by industry sector and on what proportion of this national growth might be captured by Eastern Massachusetts, as well as each community's share of our recent growth.⁴⁴

The projections have been improved through a public review period where the 101 municipalities, 6 adjoining RPAs and 2 collaborating agencies, Central Transportation Staff (CTPS) and the Executive Office of Transportation (EOT) were invited to comment.

These projections have also been allocated to Traffic Analysis Zones (TAZs) within each community. Traffic Analysis Zones provide the regional transportation model with a finer level of detail for analyzing trips around the region and links land use patterns to growth projections for MetroFuture's "base case" for the region. The allocation among TAZs in each community begins with the 2000 Census results for population along with year 2000 employment patterns developed by CTPS. Allocations of growth to each TAZ are based on historic land use trends and existing zoning within each community.

Further details on these projection methodologies are presented in this document.

⁴³ MetroFuture is MAPC's large-scale participatory initiative to develop a *vision* for the Metro Boston region's future and a *strategy* to get there. This initiative will use scenario modeling to look at different possible futures. Each scenario will be based on different assumptions about how and where we might grow, allowing us to look carefully at the consequences of that growth. (www.metrofuture.org)

⁴⁴ A note on the previous MAPC projections: MAPC produced population and employment projections in 2003 that may have produced different numbers for communities. In an attempt to better capture the trends documented in the community comments and influenced by MetroFuture's need for a method that could be adapted to allow the employment and population projections to interact, a different method was adapted.

Baseline Projection Methods

A geographic two-stage approach is taken for these projections. Regional totals are developed first and then these totals are allocated to the municipal level. Under this approach, our region as a whole is viewed as an independent socioeconomic area which responds to long-term national socioeconomic changes. Regional population projections are based on the demographic characteristics of each age-sex-race specific cohort of the region. Regional employment projections are based on both national economic structural change and region-specific characteristics. These regional projections are then allocated into each municipality reflecting the trend of each municipality's growth characteristics in the region

Population

Data

The following statistical information was used for the population projections: 1) state, regional, and community population by age, sex, and race groups, from 1985 and 2000 from the U.S. Bureau of the Census as modified by Massachusetts Department of Public Health with bridged race categories; 2) state-level annual births and deaths from 1989 to 2001 from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health to calculate natural increase; 3) state-level birth rates for age, race and the sex of the child from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health to project births; 4) state-level age-sex-race-specific death rates for Massachusetts in the form of a life table from the U.S. Bureau of the Census. Due to lack of migration data by cohort, the net migration rate is indirectly estimated by comparing the projected natural change from 1990 to 2000 and the actual population of 2000. This net migration method is discussed below.

Natural Change: Birth and Death Rate

The population is broken down into (1) 18 age cohorts from 0-4 to 85 and over, (2) by sex and (3) four race categories: Hispanic, non-Hispanic white, non-Hispanic black and other. Natural change for each cohort is calculated by taking the population by age-sex-race group at a starting point, multiplying the age-sex-race groups by age group-specific survival rates, and adding in surviving newly born children.

Birth rates by age and race of mother and sex of child are calculated by taking the number of births by age and race of mother and sex of child for years from 1999, 2000, 2001.⁴⁵ Births are averaged over three years and then divided by the number of women in the mothers' age-race group. The one-year birth rate created by this calculation is multiplied by five to create five-year birth rates. Births in the new 0-4 age cohorts were calculated by the specific birth rates by age-race of mother and sex of child and then multiplying those rates by the corresponding estimated female age-race group populations.

Each cohort (including the newborn 0-4 group) was then multiplied by the age-sex-race specific survival rate calculated for Massachusetts. The result of this calculation will give an estimate of how many individuals from each age group will have survived.

Net Migration

Historical net migration is calculated by subtracting the expected population in an end point period from the actual population reported by the US Census. The expected population is calculated by using only the natural increase method discussed above. For these projections, natural increase was calculated for the 164-community region from 1990 to 2000.⁴⁶ The result of this calculation would be considered the expected population in 2000. The expected population is subtracted from the actual population reported

⁴⁵ Method adopted from Andrew Isserman's "The Right People, the Right Rates" (Journal of the American Planning Association, Vol. 59, No. 1, Winter 1993)

⁴⁶ Census information necessary to calculate net migration by consistent race categories is not available before 1990.

by the US Census in 2000 to determine the difference between the two figures. The difference or net migration represents the population that either moved in (net positive migration) or out (net negative migration) of the community over the past 10 years.

Using the above absolute migration calculations for each cohort, the migration rate of each age-sex-race cohort is calculated by dividing the net number of people that migrated in each cohort by the average number of individuals that existed in that cohort in 1990 and 2000.⁴⁷

Regional Population Projection

Population projections for the region (164 communities) as a whole were created through use of the Cohort-Migration-Survival method by age, sex and race group as discussed earlier. This establishes consistency between past decade-by-decade population and age group fluctuations, and ties levels of expected natural increase to estimated net migration as a remainder. These relationships are then projected (continued) into the future. A diagram depicting the population projection method is included on page 4.

For example, year 2010 for the 164-community region was calculated by using the US Census 2000 population as a starting point. Natural increase from 2000 to 2010 was calculated for the region using state-level age-sex-race specific birth and survival rates. The net migration result, which is derived by multiplying the migration rate by the number of people in each age group that survived from the starting period, is then added or subtracted to the surviving population in each age group.

For a numerical example, if 100 people existed in an age-sex-race group in the starting period of 2000 and 90 survived to the period of 2010, and there was a migration rate of +10% or 9 people, then the 2010 ending population would be 99. This natural increase and net migration method was repeated every ten years until 2030.

The regional projection for each decade is then allocated into each community.

Municipal Level Population Projections

Each community has a historical proportion of the region's population. The trend in each municipality's share of the population was calculated from 1970 to 2000 by decade. From these municipal share trends, we then statistically estimate a logarithmic curve that best fits the historical trend for the share of each municipality. This estimated curve is then used to project each municipality's share in the future.

The municipal level projections are a hybrid approach based on (1) age-sex-race cohort specific share of the region and (2) municipal total population share of the region. The former approach helps us to understand the change of cohort composition of each municipality and the latter approach helps us to estimate the overall population trend of each municipality.

First, we applied the same population projection method, which is used for the regional projection, onto each municipality to see the solely demographic-change based projection. Then, we adjusted the first step projection outcome with the total population trend estimated from the second approach.

As a consequence, we generated each municipality's population projection by age cohort based on each community's trend in the share of the projected regional cohort.

⁴⁷ We constrained all age-sex-race specific 5-year migration rate to a ceiling/floor of 10%. This constraint prevents cohorts from having unusually high or low migration rates, and was imposed on 38 of the 144 age-sex-race cohorts.

Population Projections Method

Demographic Changes and Geographic Variation

